

yet we do not say but that there are many special and particular reasons of his actions and ways, which are known only to himself, and are not assignable by men. That God dealt equitably by David in vouchsafing unto him those signal means of repentance, which he did; and that he deals as equitably by such sinners, to whom he denieth the like means, may be clearly proved from the nature and import of that great attribute of his, which the Scripture calls *ἀπροσωποληψία*, 1 Pet. i. 17, or a non-acceptation of persons, as likewise from that equality in all his ways which the Scripture with no less evidence asserteth, Ezek. xviii. 25, 29. But why, or how it should be equitable in him to make such a difference between David and many other sinners, between whom notwithstanding he maketh it, may very possibly be indemonstrable by men; because all the qualifying circumstances on David's side, or of David's sins, are not known unto men as they are unto God; neither are all the aggravating circumstances of the sins of other sinners known unto them as they are also unto him. Which considered, evident it is, that God may have, yea, and questionless hath, equitable and reasonable grounds, and these in or from the persons themselves and their ways, between whom he maketh any such difference as that now in discourse, though these be investigable or past finding out by men. And why God should not give a reason or account (*i. e.* a special or particular account) of any of his matters, as Elihu speaketh, Job xxxiii. 13, the reason is so near at hand, that I shall not need to bring it any whit nearer by naming it or by insisting upon it.

3, and lastly, In case there should be found any other sinner whatsoever like unto David in all circumstances relating unto sin and righteousness, it is little questionable but that in like case of guilt and present impenitency, means of like grace and efficacy, though not literally or formally the same, in order to his repentance, would be vouchsafed unto him which were granted unto David.

A second Old Testament instance of a total recidivation from grace or true faith we find in Solomon. That Solomon before his fall by idolatry, and other sinful miscarriages, of which more presently, was a true believer, a regenerate man, a son of God, is the constant opinion of those that teach an impossibility of a total falling away from grace: I do not know any one of them otherwise minded. However, his writings being so full of heavenly wisdom and knowledge, as they are on all hands confessed to be, give a liberal testimony unto their author, that he was a man truly fearing God, and held communion with him. And Nehemiah, speaking of Solomon, saith, that "Among many nations there was no king like unto him: for he was *beloved of his God,*" &c., Neh. xiii. 26. Other proofs and arguments there are demonstrative enough of the truth and soundness of Solomon's faith, before those sad and high misdemeanors of his reported in the Scriptures; but seeing we have confitentes reos, the confession of our adversaries themselves in the point, we shall make no further labour of the proof of it.

Again, that Solomon sinned at a very high rate of wickedness and

provocation, is nothing but what the same persons freely enough acknowledge. And in the Synod of Dort itself a prime member thereof publicly said, that "Solomon practised in sin and wickedness, whatsoever the lust and licentiousness of a king could stretch themselves unto."\* The sad history of his wickedness is drawn up by the Holy Ghost himself, 1 Kings xi. 1, &c., where, having reported his disobedience to the law of God, by which the Israelites were prohibited to marry with the daughters of a strange god, in taking unto him no fewer than seven hundred wives and three hundred concubines of the women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, &c., and withal, the several abominable idolatries, wherewith he came to be polluted hereby, he adds, that "His heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father; that he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord; that he went not fully after the Lord, as did David his father; that the Lord was angry with him because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel," &c. I am no enemy to their opinion who affirm that Solomon returned back again to the Lord God of Israel by way of repentance; but assuredly during all that wallowing in the mire mentioned, under the pollution and guilt of all those abominations charged by the Holy Ghost upon him, his back was towards him, and his person under the dint of that heavy doom which is denounced against idolaters and all that work abomination, viz. exclusion from the kingdom of God, as hath been largely shown already. The nakedness of such allegations and washy pretences, which are commonly laid hold on to make Solomon a true believer and son of God, during his most dreadful apostasy from him, lately described, hath been detected, both in the last preceding chapter, as likewise in the late examination of David's case. So that we may without fear of the least breach of charity, or of judging any unrighteous judgment, conclude, that Solomon, whilst his heart was turned away from the Lord God of Israel to walk after other gods, as after Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, after Molech and Milcom, the abominations of the children of Ammon, after Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians, &c., and during his obduration and impenitency, in these horrid ways and practices, was an enemy unto God, and God unto him, and the former relation between them of father and son wholly dissolved. They that hold or teach otherwise both represent God altogether unlike unto himself, rendering him a most unworthy acceptor of persons, and besides cut the sinews of the credit and authority of the Scriptures, which still number idolaters and workers of iniquity amongst those who shall have no inheritance in the kingdom of God. But of these things enough formerly. Yet let us hear what the patrons of the common doctrine of perseverance have to plead for the life of Solomon's faith, even whilst he walked in those ways of death, whereof we heard so lately.

\* *Solomo, quicquid per regiam libidinem et licentiam perpetrari potuit, commisit.—J. Deodat, of Geneva.*

Solomon, say they, could not fall away totally from his faith, nor from the saving love of God, because God had promised unto David his father, that he "Would be a Father unto him, (his son Solomon,) and that he should be a son unto him; and that his mercy should not depart from him, as he took it from Saul," 2 Sam. vii. 14, 15. I answer,

1. Evident it is, that the mercy, or kindness of God, here mentioned, was vouchsafed by him, as well unto Saul, as unto Solomon. For his promise is, that he would not take away his mercy, or kindness, as some translate, from the latter, as he took it (*i. e.* the same mercy) from the former, Saul. If then the mercy here spoken of, was the saving mercy of God, out of which he purposeth to give eternal life, then Saul was elect, and a child of God, and yet fell totally and finally away, and had this grace, or mercy, of election, taken from him. If it be a mercy, or kindness, of any other kind, the insisting upon it is altogether irrelative to the business in hand.

2. When God saith, that "his mercy should not depart from Solomon," the meaning clearly is, that God would not translate the kingdom into another family, or line, as he had transferred it from Saul and his house, but would continue it in David's line by Solomon. The words immediately following, make the face of this interpretation to shine. "And thine *house*, and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever." Verse 16.

3, and lastly, It appears from words spoken by David unto his son Solomon a little before his death, that he understood the mercy, or kindness, promised unto Solomon, not of the saving mercy of God, which, according to the sense of our opposers, is unremovable wherever it be once pitched, but of such a mercy, as hath been declared. "And thou, Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind. For the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts: if thou seek him, he will be found of thee: but if thou forsake him, *he will cast thee off for ever*," 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. Therefore David himself did not apprehend any such mercy to be entailed or settled upon his son Solomon by God, in the promise mentioned, as our adversaries imagine.

Nor is that, which was thought upon by a great man in the Synod of Dort, of any whit more value, to prove the standing of Solomon's faith, whilst himself fell so foully, as we have heard. It is the testimony, which Solomon himself gives concerning himself, in these words: "Also my wisdom remained with me," Eccles. ii. 9. From hence this author judged it a legitimate inference, that Solomon remained sound in his faith, whilst he halted right down, yea, and fell desperately, as we have heard, before God. But, as the Proverb is, *Similes habent labra lactucas*, like lips, like lattuces: such as this man's cause is, such is his argument, or

plea for it. For what is there in the words cited, any ways to justify Solomon's faith, whilst himself fell into that fearful condemnation, which hath oft been declared? It is true, wisdom sometimes in Scripture signifies, the true, sound, and saving knowledge of God, sometimes a religious frame of heart, inclining a man to a conscientious observation of all the laws and precepts of God. But unless it could be proved, that it always is found in one of these two significations, and never in any other, which is a task that would prove a reproach to any man's parts and learning, that should undertake it, it is no ways reasonable to put either of these upon it in the place in hand. For there is nothing more clear, than that Solomon speaketh here of that wisdom, which, as he saith in the former chapter, verse 13: "he gave his heart to know," and which consisteth in the observation, experience, and knowledge of the "things that are done under heaven;" in which also he affirmeth that there is much grief, and vexation of spirit, &c. verses 17, 18: which, when he had attained, he declares, chap. ii., that he fell to the practical part of it, and gave himself to the procurement and enjoyment of the pleasures, and all the contentments, that the world is able to afford unto men, and which men generally seek after, according to the best of their understandings, and opportunities otherwise. And having particularized several of his principal enjoyments in this kind, verses 3—6, &c. he concludes from the said inventory, or survey, verse 9, thus: "So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem;" adding, "also my wisdom remained with me," in the original, stood by me, or to me, meaning, that he was very circumspect and careful, not to destroy, maim, or prejudice, that principle of wisdom, which he had travelled so long for, and by which he had raised himself to a far greater estate, in honours, riches, pleasures and contentments in the world, than any other man; careful, I say, he professeth himself to have been, not to endamage or prejudice this his wisdom, by those abundant pleasures and delights, whereof he stood possessed, and which he freely enjoyed, as many are apt to do upon such occasions, and by such means. Afterwards, though he prefers that wisdom, which he had spoken of hitherto, above folly, *i. e.* above a brutish and sottish ignorance of such things, which concern a man's interest of peace and comfort in the world, chap. ii. 13: yet he acknowledgeth a vanity in this also, inasmuch as after a short and inconsiderable space of time, the case and condition of such a fool, will be every whit as good, as of a wise man. "Then I said in my heart, as it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me: and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also is vanity:—and how dieth the wise man, as the fool!" &c. So that by the wisdom, which Solomon saith remained with him, in the fullest enjoyment of the delights and contentments of the world, is clearly meant, not a sacred, but a politic or civil wisdom, which first he gave his heart to seek, and after-

wards, having obtained it, improved, to the rendering of his condition in the world every ways as desirable, as the materials of the world, under the best improvement, would make it. And besides, evident it is from what hath been said, and from the carriage of the context, both before, and after, and indeed from the scope and purport of the whole book, that Solomon, in the place in hand, doth not speak of his latter times, wherein he turned aside after idols, and said to the stock, or graven image, "Deliver me: for thou art my god;" Isa. xlv. 17: wherein he heaped up strange women, wives and concubines, as before he had done wisdom, "like the sand upon the sea shore" innumerable; as if his meaning were, that all the while he dishonoured himself by serving the devil in these gross, brutish, and unmanlike courses, his religious wisdom, his sound and saving knowledge of the true God, remained with him: but of his middle, most prosperous, and flourishing times, when he was to be seen in all his glory, when, as himself said, the "Lord had given him rest, or peace, on every side, so that he had neither adversary, nor evil occurrent," 1 Kings v. 4. And his meaning, as hath been said, clearly is, that the great heat of all this outward prosperity did not dissolve the spirit or strength of that wisdom, which made his face to shine in the eyes of all the nations and princes of the world round about him: which wisdom, did not so much, if at all, stand in the devoutness of his heart or soul towards God, as in the knowledge of natural and civil things; as it is described, 1 Kings iv. from verse 29 to the end of the chapter. Concerning idols, and idolaters, the father had said before, "they that make them, are like unto them," (*i. e.* as Mr. J. Deodat himself, who is the man that pretended to find Solomon's faith alive in the words in hand, whilst Solomon himself was dead in Baal, or in some of Baal's companions, interprets it, "stupid and blind, as the idols themselves are,") "and so is every one that trusteth in them," Psal. cxv. 8. Therefore, questionless, the son, after his return from that folly, would not have pleaded the standing of his wisdom by him, whilst he was an idolater, and patron of idols. But the truth is, that the words insisted upon are every ways so inconsiderable in point of proof, for the continuance of Solomon's faith during his continuance in his idolatries, that the recourse made to them for proof hereof, is an argument to me very considerable, that the patrons of that opinion are extremely straitened and put to it, through want of so much as any tolerable argument or proof, for the maintaining of it. It is a sign that the soul is hungry indeed, when every bitter thing becomes sweet unto it.

Thus then we clearly find that there is no special or particular ground or argument at all, of any value, to prove that either David the father, during his impenitency after the horrid crimes of murder and adultery perpetrated by him, or that Solomon the son, during the like impenitency in him upon his idolatrous backslidings, did retain any saving principle of grace or faith in them; but that,

during their respective impenitencies, they were children of wrath, liable to the same sentence of condemnation with the promiscuous multitude, or generality of murderers and idolaters, for the proof whereof, several pregnant arguments have been levied from the Scriptures. As for such arguments and grounds by which the certain perseverance of the saints in general, in the truth and soundness of their faith, is commonly pleaded and maintained, they have been formerly weighed in the balance of the sanctuary and found too light. So that we may very safely conclude, that both David and Solomon were not only under a possibility of a total falling away from the grace of God, wherein they sometimes stood, which is common to all the saints, but that they taught the world the truth and certainty of such a possibility by reducing it into act, I mean by falling away totally from it.

Neither are examples of the like sad miscarriages wanting in the New Testament. The apostle speaks of some in his days, who "having put away a good conscience concerning faith, made shipwreck" thereby, 1 Tim. i. 19. And in another place, speaking of the dangerous doctrine of Hymenæus and Philetus, who taught that the resurrection was already past, he saith, that they overthrew, or destroyed, the faith of some, 2 Tim. ii. 17. Elsewhere, he speaks of some who were "then turned aside after Satan," 1 Tim. v. 15. They, who by putting away a good conscience made shipwreck of faith, must needs be supposed, 1. To have had true faith; 2. To suffer an absolute or total loss of it. For the first, If we shall suppose that they, who put away a good conscience from them, had it, or were possessed of it before such their putting it away, we must suppose withal that they had true saving faith; because, goodness of conscience cannot take place but only where such a faith gives being unto it, which, in that respect, is said to "purify the heart," Acts xv. 9; as on the contrary, the very "minds and consciences of unbelievers are said to be defiled," Tit. i. 15. Nor doth the Scripture any where, to my best remembrance, speak of a good or pure conscience, but where the goodness of it is supposed to flow from a sound knowledge of the will of God, in conjunction with an upright desire of doing all things according to the tenor of the truth known. "The end of the commandment," saith the apostle in this very chapter, "is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," 1 Tim. i. 5. So again, "Pray for us, for we trust we have a *good conscience*, in all things willing to live honestly," Heb. xiii. 8. Another apostle exhorteth Christians to "sanctify the Lord in their hearts, and to be ready always to give an answer unto every man that asketh them a reason of the hope that is in them with meekness and fear, having a *good conscience*," &c. 1 Pet. iii. 15, 16. A little after, he placeth the sum and substance of true Christianity in a good conscience. "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us; not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer (or demand) of a *good conscience* towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus

Christ," verse 21; meaning to add this by the way, that baptism, typified or presignified by the ark, wherein Noah and his family were preserved from perishing with the rest of the world by water, doth contribute towards our salvation from the condemnation of the world round about us for sin, not so much by the letter or material effect of it, but by typifying, holding forth, and assuring us that a good conscience, raised or built upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and the sound knowledge hereof, doth require or demand this salvation of God, and that according to the promise and encouragement given unto it by himself in that behalf, and therefore so as that it shall not, cannot, be denied, of what it demandeth of Him in this kind. But that a pure, which only is the good, conscience still springeth from a sound faith in Jesus Christ, and is found in conjunction with it, these places, 1 Tim. iii. 9; Heb. ix. 14; x. 22, compared together and added to the former, are sufficient to persuade. And concerning the place in hand, some of our best and most orthodox expositors understand the good conscience mentioned to be none other. Musculus, upon the words, "Which" (good conscience) "some having put away concerning faith," &c., commenteth thus, "Here he speaketh the same which before he had expressed thus, 'Now the end of the commandment' (or charge which I give thee) 'is charity out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned, from which some going astray have turned aside to vain jangling,'"\* &c. His words immediately following, to which I refer the reader, are every whit as plain and pregnant to the same point: showing, that by a good conscience, he doth not understand a conscience only morally good, and such as may be found in mere natural men ignorant of Christ and the gospel, but a conscience spiritually or Christianly good. Nor is Bullinger, his compeer, of any other mind. "The safest ship," saith he, upon the place, "in this vast sea of a world of errors and wickednesses, is canonical (or scriptural) truth, pure faith, and sincere charity."† In which words he explains the apostle's good conscience by sincereness of love or charity. Nor could Calvin himself finish what he had to say upon the place, until he had given testimony to the same truth. "The metaphor," saith he, "taken from shipwreck answereth most aptly. For it implies that the course of our navigation (in the world) must be steered by a good conscience, that so our faith may come safe into the haven, otherwise we shall be in danger of shipwreck."‡ Doubtless, he doth not mean that the course of our navigation through the

\* Idem dicit, quòd suprà ad hunc modum expressit: Finis verò denunciationis hujus est charitas ex puro corde, et conscientia bonâ, et fide non simulatâ: à quibus quòd aberrârunt quidam, deflexerunt ad vaniloquium, &c.

† Tutissima enim navis in vasto hoc mundi errorum et scelerum pelago, est veritas canonica, fides pura, et charitas sincera, &c.

‡ Metaphora à naufragio sumpta aptissimè quadrat. Nam innuit, ut salva fides ad portum usque perveniat, navigationis nostræ cursum bonâ conscientia regendum esse: aliàs naufragii esse periculum; hoc est, ne fides malâ conscientia, tanquam gurgite, in mari procelloso mergatur,

world, that so our faith may come safe into the harbour, should be steered or guided by a mere moral conscience, how good soever in this kind, or by such a conscience as Cato, Socrates, or Seneca had, or might have had. Such a conscience as this is no fit steersman or guide to such a faith, with which, or by which, they must make the port of heaven, whoever arrive there. Therefore, certainly he conceiveth that it is such a good conscience, the putting away of which the apostle renders as the ground, reason, or cause why some make shipwreck of faith, the goodness whereof ariseth from such a faith which accompanieth salvation, and which being carefully preserved and kept, preserveth and keepeth that faith from whence it sprang, from corruption or declining.

Concerning the two places which are commonly insisted upon, to prove that a good conscience in Scripture doth not always signify a conscience Christianly, spiritually, or savingly good, but sometimes morally good only, *i.e.* which is not defiled or disturbed in the peace of it, with sins against knowledge, (which goodness of conscience is sometimes found in mere civil or natural men,) though destitute of evangelical illumination; the truth is, that neither the one nor the other of them proveth any such thing. In the former of these places, the apostle Paul speaketh thus: "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day," Acts xxiii. 1. In the latter, thus: "I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers with pure conscience," &c. 2 Tim. i. 3. For neither of these places do necessarily, nor so much as probably relate to the time of Paul's pharisaism, as if his meaning were, that all that time he had kept a good conscience towards God, (for how could he, then, with truth or singleness of heart, have made this confession, "Of sinners I am the chief?" 1 Tim. i. 15,) but to the time of his apostleship, or profession of Christianity, as appears clearly, from the former place, upon this account. Paul was accused by the Jews, as an apostate from the religion of his forefathers, and the true worship of God, as they supposed, and that he was fallen from Judaism to the sect of Christians, yea, and was become a ringleader of them. This they conceived to have been a high misdemeanor in him, and accused him as a very wicked and ungodly person for so doing. To this accusation and crime objected, the apostle answers to this effect: "Men and brethren, whereas I have forsaken the religion and worship of the Jews, and have embraced, and do yet embrace the Christian religion instead of it, I have done nothing, I do nothing herein, but upon very justifiable grounds, and with a good conscience, inasmuch as I have obeyed God in so doing; of which I am ready to give you a perfect account, if you please to hear me." This to be the true purport and drift of the apostle's words, the sequel of the context makes yet more apparent. For, upon the hearing of the words in debate uttered by him, Ananias the high priest was sorely offended, and commanded the standers-by to smite him on the mouth, for so speaking. Now it is no ways reasonable to conceive that he would

have taken it so heinously that Paul should say that he had always lived in all good conscience before God, whilst he professed Judaism, and before he became a Christian. Such a saying as this would rather have gratified and pleased, than offended him. But that he should say that he lived with all good conscience in the profession of Christianity, this was a sword that passed through Ananias' soul.

For the other place, where the apostle saith, that he served God from his forefathers with a pure conscience, his meaning only is, that he serves none other God, but him whom his forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob worshipped, and that him he served with a pure conscience, as they also did. To qualify the Jews, who took great offence at him for changing his religion, and withal to make this practice of his more passable with others, he oft recourseth to this apology, viz. that in the profession of Christianity, he serves no other God but the God of his forefathers. See Acts xxii. 14; xxiv. 14; xxvi. 7; xxviii. 20, &c. In this sense Calvin himself interprets the place in hand, on which he hath these words, amongst others of like import, "Certain it is, that Paul's conscience was not always pure, inasmuch as himself confesseth, that through hypocrisy he was deceived, when he indulged himself a liberty of lusting. For whereas Chrysostom excuseth his pharisaism, in that he opposed the gospel out of ignorance and not out of malice, it no ways satisfieth. For the eulogy, or commendation, of a pure conscience is not vulgar or common; neither can it be separated from the sincere and serious fear of God. Therefore I restrain his words to the present time, thus: 'That he worshipped one and the same God with his forefathers: but now, since he was enlightened by the gospel, he worshippeth him with a sincere affection of heart\*'" and soul. It were easy to second Calvin, with several others of his own band, in the interpretation mentioned: but when little is to be done, much help is but a burden. Thus then we see, that by a good conscience, which some putting away, make shipwreck of faith, as the apostle saith, must needs be meant such a conscience which hath its goodness from true-faith, and cannot be separated from it: and, consequently, that the persons here spoken of, were or had been true believers.

Besides, that faith, of which some are said to have made shipwreck, cannot reasonably be supposed to have been a feigned, counterfeit, or pretended faith only, nor any thing accompanying destruction; because it is such a faith which the apostle exhorts and encourageth Timothy to hold fast, "holding faith and a good conscience, which some having put away, concerning faith, (which

\* Certum est, non semper puram fuisse Pauli conscientiam, utpote qui fatetur se per hypocrisin fuisse deceptum, quòd sibi concupiscendi licentiam indulgeret. Nam quòd excusat Chrysostomus ejus pharisaismum, eò quòd non malitià, sed ignoratione evangelium oppugnabat, id non satisfacit. Neque enim vulgare elogium est puræ conscientie, nec potest à sincero et serio Dei timore separari. Itaque ad præsens tempus restringo, hoc modo, quòd unum cum proavis suis, et eundem Deum colat: sed nunc colat sincero cordis affectu, ex quo per evangelium erat illuminatus.

I advise thee to hold and keep,) have made shipwreck." Doubtless the apostle would not have persuaded Timothy to hold or keep such a faith with which he might perish: nor had the making shipwreck of no better a commodity than so, been any such great loss unto him. 3. That faith which he exhorteth Timothy to hold, must needs be supposed to be that faith which he was possessed of at present, and which was now in him. And that this was a true faith, appears from several passages in the two epistles written by this apostle unto him, especially from those words, "When I call to remembrance *the unfeigned faith* that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois," &c. 2 Tim. i. 5. 4. The faith which he exhorts Timothy to hold, and, consequently, the faith whereof he admonisheth him that some made shipwreck, by the means specified, must in reason be such a faith of which he had discoursed before in the chapter. Now this was a faith unfeigned, out of which that charity or love floweth, which he saith is the end of the commandment, 1 Tim. i. 5; such a faith, of which he speaks, (a few verses before the place in hand,) in reference to himself, thus: "And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus," ver. 14; such a faith by which men were to believe on Christ to life everlasting, ver. 16. 5, and lastly, The faith here spoken of, is such a faith, in the retention or holding whereof the warring of a good warfare consists. This is evident from the context, and connexion between this and the next preceding verse. "This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee," (*i. e.* according to the sense and judgments of the prophets, or interpreters of the Scriptures, who unanimously agreed in this, that thou wert a person fit for the work of the ministry, and by all means oughtest to be called thereunto,) "that thou by them," *i. e.* being encouraged by them, "mightest war a good warfare, holding faith and a good conscience," &c. Now if by faith should be meant nothing but only an outward profession of the gospel, or the doctrine thereof, Timothy might have held these, and yet not have warred a good warfare. For who will say that Judas warred a good warfare, who yet held an outward profession of the gospel, and preached the doctrine thereof truly? And it is generally granted by those, who by faith, in the place in hand, will needs understand the doctrine of the gospel, that men who are no good soldiers of Jesus Christ, who are destitute of sound and saving faith, may yet hold, yea, hold fast, the doctrine of the gospel; yea, and this to the suffering of death itself for it. Therefore, questionless, the faith of which the apostle speaks in the place before us, is a true, sound, and saving faith.

Nor is this any thing but the sense and judgment of very learned and orthodox expositors upon the place. Musculus affirmeth, that the apostle "speaks here the same thing which before he had expressed in these words: But the end of this commandment (or charge) is love, out of a pure heart, and good conscience, and faith

unfeigned; from which whilst some went astray, they turned aside to vain jangling,"\* &c. Presently after, the apostle, he saith, "admonisheth us, that they cannot have a good conscience who are strangers unto charity, a pure heart, and faith unfeigned; and, moreover, that upon the putting away of a good conscience, we are in imminent danger of making shipwreck of *the true faith* and religion of Christ."† Therefore, doubtless, it came not near the thoughts of this author to conceive that any other faith should be meant in the place in hand but only that which was "true and unfeigned." Calvin also recovered himself before the end of his commentary on the Scripture in hand, and asserteth the same interpretation. His words upon this account, to save transcription, are to be seen in page 464. J. Deodat, in his pious Annotations upon the Bible, interpreteth the word "faith," in the passage in hand, as his words are Englished, thus: "Faith, viz. sufficient knowledge, full assurance, and *sincere* profession of the truth of the gospel." So that there is not only ground upon ground, reason upon reason, to demonstrate, that by "faith," in the Scripture under consideration, must needs be meant a true, solid, and sincere faith, and not the bare doctrine of faith only; but author upon author also, and expositor upon expositor, and these orthodox, to avouch the same interpretation. Therefore the first of the two particulars mentioned is unquestionable, viz. that that "faith" whereof the apostle saith "some made shipwreck," was a true justifying faith, and such, wherein had they persevered unto the end, would have been accompanied with salvation.

The latter we shall not need to insist upon, it being generally granted by our adversaries, that by "making shipwreck" of the "faith" here spoken of, what faith soever it be, is meant the utter, absolute, and total loss of it. All expositors, without exception, that I have seen, are unanimous in this.

The line of the same interpretation is to be stretched over the other Scripture also, mentioned as parallel with the former, wherein Hymenæus and Philetus are said to have "overthrown the faith of some," by teaching that the "resurrection" was "past already," 2 Tim. ii. 18. That by "overthrowing," is meant an utter and total subversion or destruction of the "faith" mentioned, is every man's sense upon the place. So that the proof hereof would be but an impertinency. That the "faith" here said to have been "overthrown" by the doctrine mentioned, was a true justifying faith, appears clearly from the context. In the verse next before, the apostle had said, "And their word will eat (or fret) as doth a canker, of whom is Hymenæus and Philetus." Now it is the

\* Idem dicit, quòd suprâ ad hunc modum expressit: Finis verò denunciationis hujus est *charitas ex puro corde*, et *conscientiâ bonâ*, et *fide non simulatâ*: à quibus quòd aberrârunt quidam, deflexerunt ad vaniloquium.

† Monet nos bonam eos conscientiam habere non posse, qui alieni sunt à charitate, corde puro, et fide non simulatâ: deinde, repulsâ bonâ conscientiâ, in proximo esse ut incidamus in naufragium circâ veram Christi fidem et religionem, &c.

nature and property of this ulcerous disease, not to prey, feed upon, or consume only the corrupt humours, or putrefied members of the body, which would tend rather to its preservation than destruction, but those especially that are most vital and sound, yea, and this to the extinguishing life itself. Calvin, upon the place, affirms this as the judgment of all physicians: "All physicians," saith he, "affirm this to be the nature of a (cancer, or) gangrene, that without very present help, (against it,) it spreads to the parts adjoining, and eats into the bones themselves, and gives not over its prevailing progress until the man dieth. For inasmuch as upon a gangrene a mortification or sideration presently followeth, which very suddenly with its contagion infects the other parts, to the universal destruction of the body, Paul elegantly compareth adulterate (or erroneous) doctrines to such a pernicious contagion. For if you shall once give way unto them, they will proceed and prevail to the destruction of the whole church."\* If "erroneous doctrines" may possibly "prevail to the destruction of the whole church," doubtless they may as possibly, yea, much more possibly, "destroy the faith" of some true believers; considering that the whole church is not made up of hypocrites or formal professors only, but hath many sound and sincere believers in it. Therefore Calvin, in the interpretation asserted, is either with us, or against himself. His successor also, though after some descents, Mr. J. Deodat, in his said Annotations, commenteth the words "and their word will eat," &c., thus: "Being once admitted into the soul, it will penetrate to the total extinguishing of the *spiritual life* thereof." Therefore he likewise, by the "faith" said to be "overthrown" by Hymenæus and Philetus their doctrine, clearly understandeth such a faith by which men live spiritually.

In the verse immediately following, the apostle subjoineth, by way of antithesis, "Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his: and, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity," 2 Tim. ii. 19. The words in the original are these: Ὁ μέντοι στερεὸς θεμέλιος τοῦ θεοῦ ἕστηκεν, &c. *i. e.* "the stable," or sure, "foundation of God," standeth, or "hath stood," &c. In these words the apostle preventeth a scruple or objection which might possibly arise in the minds of some, upon occasion of what he had said concerning Hymenæus and Philetus their forsaking of the truth, and the overthrow of the faith of some others by means of their error. The scruple or objection is this: If such men of note professing the Christian religion as Hymenæus and Philetus were, grew out of liking of that faith which sometimes they professed,

\* Sed omnes medici talem ejus naturam esse affirmant, ut nisi quàm ocissimè succurras, ad contiguas partes serpat, adeoque in ossa penetret, nec grassandi finem faciat, nisi homine extincto. Quùm enim gangrænâ protinus sequatur νέκρωσις vel sideratio, quæ mox suo contagio inficit reliqua membra usque ad universalem corporis interitum, eleganter cum tam exitiali contagione Paulus adulterinas doctrinas comparat. Nam si aditum illis semel dederis, pervadunt usque ad totius ecclesiæ interitum.

and forsook it, and besides prevailed with some others also to relinquish their faith, are not we in danger of falling away likewise, and so of losing all that we have either done or suffered hitherto in a Christian profession? To this objection or scruple, the apostle, in the words now in hand, answereth to this effect: That notwithstanding the falling away of men, whoever, or how many soever they be, yet the glorious gospel and truth of God therein, stands, and always hath stood, firm, stedfast, and inviolable; which gospel hath the matter and substance of this saying in it as a seal for the establishment and security of those that are upright in the sight of God, viz. that "God knoweth," *i. e.* takes special notice of, approveth, and delighteth in "those that are his," *i. e.* who truly believe in him, love, and serve him; yea, and further, hath this item or heavenly admonition in it, tending to the same end, the firm establishing of those that are God's in the way of their faith—"Let every one that calleth upon the name of Christ," *i. e.* makes profession of his name, "depart from iniquity." So that in this answer to the scruple or demand mentioned, the apostle intimateth, by way of satisfaction, that the reason why men fall away from the faith of the gospel is, partly, because they do not seriously consider what gracious and worthy respects God beareth to "those that are his," *i. e.* who cleave to him in faith and love; partly, also, because they degenerate into loose and sinful courses, contrary to the law imposed by the gospel upon all those in especial manner that profess Christianity, and consequently that there is no such danger of their falling away who shall duly and thoroughly consider the one and conscientiously observe the other. In asserting the stability of the truth of God in the gospel, by way of antidote against the fears of those that may possibly suspect it because of the defection of others from it, he doth but tread in his own footsteps elsewhere, as, viz. where he saith, as he doth a few verses before in this very chapter, "If we believe not," *i. e.* though we men believe not what he hath promised, "yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself," 2 Tim. ii. 13; as if he should say, The unbelief of men, whether of those who never so much as pretended to believe in him, or of those who have revolted from their faith, ought not in reason to be so construed or looked upon as if it were any argument or proof that therefore God should be unfaithful or untrue, considering that it is altogether impossible with his nature and being to "deny himself," *i. e.* either to say in words, or to import by action, that he is not a God; the latter of which he should do in case he should promise and not perform accordingly, though it be too well consistent with the nature of men thus to deny him. So likewise where he saith, to the same point, "What if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God of none effect?" *i. e.* shall the unbelief of men be interpreted as any tolerable argument or ground to prove that God is unfaithful? or, which is the same, that he hath no other, no

better faith in him, than that which sometimes miscarrieth and produceth not that for which it stands engaged? implying, that such an interpretation as this is unreasonable in the highest. But to give a little further light to the Scripture opened, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth," and to the interpretation lately given, it is to be considered that the word θεμέλιος,\* translated "foundation," doth not only signify the foundation of a house, building, or the like, but a bond or instrument in writing, whereby he that lendeth money or intrusteth goods unto another is wont to be secured by him who borroweth or is intrusted, that he shall duly receive what he hath contracted for with him. Such a writing or instrument as this is a kind of politic or civil foundation on which the creditor builds a rational hope or expectation of receiving from his debtor what is equitably and upon promise due unto him. Now, that the apostle, in the words in hand, rather alludeth to such a "foundation" as this, if it must be so called, than unto that other, is very probable, at least, from hence, viz. because to this latter kind of foundation, which I call politic or civil, sealing is most proper; whereas it cannot be ascribed unto the other but by a very improper, strained, uncouth, and unheard-of attribution. For who hath heard of the sealing of a foundation of a house or building? or to what end or purpose should such a foundation as this be sealed? But writings for the security of contracts or engagements between man and man, are, by the custom of almost all nations, wont to be sealed, yea, and are not authentic, or valid in law, unless they be sealed. So that, by the "sure" or firm "foundation" of God, which is said to "stand," how fast soever men fall from the belief of it, questionless is meant that gracious contract or covenant made by God with the world to give life and salvation to all those that shall believe in Jesus Christ; which covenant is now exhibited in writing unto those concerned in it, men, as a foundation for all men to build a hope and expectation of life and salvation upon, according to the tenor and terms of it. This foundation is said to be στερεός, "firm," or stable, because it is such in the nature of it, as being nothing else but the word or promise of a God who "cannot lie" or deceive: it is said to "stand," or to have stood, ἔστηκε, because it never failed any person that built upon it. It is said to have this seal, "The Lord knoweth who are his," because the firmness or stability of it is further confirmed unto men by that perfect knowledge, declared and asserted in it, which God taketh and hath of all those who truly believe, whereby they become appropriately his; by means of which knowledge and approbation he is in a perfect capacity to make this signal difference between them and others who believe not, or revolt from their faith, viz. to save the one and to destroy the other when time comes. Again, it is said to have this "seal" also, "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from

\* See Sam. Petit Var. Lectionum, lib. i. cap. 11.

evil," because the said truth and stedfastness of it is yet further commended and ratified unto men by the holiness of the commandments given in it unto those that profess the name and faith of Christ. A promise or covenant of life and salvation is therefore likely to be from God, and consequently to be stable and firm, because it requires such an excellency of life and conversation of all those who expect benefit by it. However, that, by the "foundation of God," in the place in hand, should be meant the election of some particular persons by God, hath neither the good-will of the metaphor or phrase, nor yet of the context, for it; of which more hereafter in due place.

We have formerly observed it as Chrysostom's judgment concerning Judas, that at that time, when Christ made this promise unto the twelve, "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel," Matt. xix. 28, Judas was, as well in respect of the inward frame of his heart, as of his outward conversation, in the same capacity, with the rest of the apostles, of "sitting upon a throne to judge the twelve tribes of Israel," *i. e.* of being saved. This opinion of his concerning Judas, he argues and proves from the said promise; which, he judgeth, cannot be verified, unless it be supposed that Judas, one of the twelve, was at this time under the grace of it, and in such a relation and condition God-ward, wherein had he persevered, he should actually have been a partaker of the glory promised, with his fellows. We took knowledge likewise, in the place related unto, that P. Martyr approved the said judgment of this father, together with the ground and reason of it; delivering unto us, upon occasion thereof, this most true and necessary rule, *viz.*, that "Those promises of God are to be understood with reference to the present state and condition of things,"\* with those, to whom they were made. And Lorinus, writing upon Acts i. 16, reports it as the probable opinion of Cyril, Jerome, Tertullian, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Basil, Ammonius, Leontius, Olympiodorus, Anastasius, Leo, Euthymius, &c., that Judas, when he was chosen by Christ to be an apostle, was a good man, and so continued for some time afterwards: and withal mentioneth the grounds upon which some of the said authors so conceived of him. We shall not need to argue the case of Demas, Alexander, Hymenæus, and several others, whose revoltings from the faith are recorded in the Scriptures. Concerning the two latter of the three now mentioned, Hymenæus and Alexander, it is expressly said, that they were delivered up unto Satan by the apostle Paul, 1 Tim. i. 20. Which plainly showeth, 1. That they were judged meet by the saints to be received as church-members by them. For otherwise the apostle demands, "What have I to do to judge them that are without?" 1 Cor. v. 12;

\* Promissiones itaque illæ Dei, pro statu præsentis rerum intelligendæ sunt.

meaning, to inflict any ecclesiastical or church-censure upon those who were not members of some Christian church, or other. And if they were judged meet by the saints of that church, who admitted them into Christian communion with them, they were judged true believers by them: and their judgment of them as being true believers, is a far better ground for us to judge them to have been such also, than their apostasy is to judge them to have been hypocrites, at that time, when they judged them true believers. 2. Their delivering up unto Satan by the apostle showeth, that he judged them totally fallen from their faith, and so dismembered from Christ: for otherwise he should have delivered up unto Satan such persons whom he judged true members of Christ. There is the like consideration of the incestuous person in the church of Corinth. His receiving into this church, is more than a probable argument that he was at this time a true believer. Nor is there the least intimation given of any difference between him, and the rest of the members of this church, whom the apostle termeth "saints by calling," and, "sanctified by Christ Jesus." And if he were not a true member of Christ, before the committing of the sin for which he was delivered up unto Satan by the apostle, he sustained no great loss in his spiritual condition, either by committing the said sin, or by being so delivered up for it. For upon this supposition, he was no better than a hypocrite before, and worse he could not lightly be afterwards. And besides, the tenor and import of the sentence of excommunication, is not declarative, that the person sentenced never was a sound believer, or true member of Christ, but that now by his sinful misdemeanor, whereby he incurreth that sentence, he hath dismembered himself from him. Nor can the said sentence be duly styled a delivering up unto Satan, if it must be still supposed, that the persons justly sentenced herewith had been always, before the said sentence, as much under his power, as they are or can be afterwards. So that, all circumstances considered, it cannot reasonably be judged, but that the person now in instance had sometimes been a true member of Christ, and believer. But that he sinned away this his blessed relation, by that sin for which he was delivered up unto Satan, needs no other proof, but the apostle's express order for this sentence to pass upon him, 1 Cor. v. 3—5. "For I verily as absent in body, but present in spirit, have determined already, as though I were present, that he that hath done this thing, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that such an one, I say, by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, be delivered unto Satan," &c. Doubtless this apostle, who professeth that he "could do nothing against the truth, but for the truth," never consented, much less commanded, that any true member of Christ should be delivered unto Satan. But, as hath been said, the cause in hand standeth in no need of confirmation from these examples; the serviceableness whereof for such a purpose, may possibly be evaded with more plausibleness of pretence

than the former. Any one instance of a total declining in him, who hath at any time been a true believer, is sufficient to prove the truth of the doctrine under maintenance: yea, as was said in the beginning of this chapter, though no such instance could be produced, yet may the said doctrine receive demonstrative evidence, and this in abundance, otherwise: and, I trust, hath received it from the premises in this discourse. Yet give me leave to add one instance more.

Concerning the Galatians, unto whom the apostle Paul writeth, any man that shall diligently peruse the epistle written unto them, cannot lightly but conclude, that certainly these men, I mean the generality of them, and more particularly those for whose sake especially the epistle was written, were sometimes, viz. when Paul left them, after he had preached the gospel for a while unto them, true believers, and persons justified in the sight of God; and afterwards, viz. when he wrote the epistle unto them, had suffered a total loss of their faith, and of justification by it. That they were sometimes true believers, these passages compared, and laid together, are sufficiently pregnant, I conceive, to give satisfaction unto any duly considering man. "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel," Gal. i. 6. Their removal from him that called them, &c., plainly supposeth, that sometimes they had cleaved unto him, viz. in the cordial embracement of that gospel which he had sent amongst them, and by which he had called them. So again: "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" chap. iii. 2, 5. The receiving of the Spirit, is still appropriated unto true believers. "This he spake of the Spirit, which they that *believed* in him should receive," John vii. 39. And elsewhere: "And God which knoweth the heart, gave them witness," viz., that they believed, as appears from the former verse, "in giving unto them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us:" to omit other places. Again: "And my trial, which was in my flesh, ye despised not, neither abhorred: but ye received me as an angel of God, yea, as Christ Jesus. What was then your felicity? For I bear you record, that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them unto me," Gal. iv. 14, 15. If our Saviour's words be true, "He that receiveth a prophet, in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward," Matt. x. 41: doubtless he that receiveth an apostle, not only in the name of an apostle, but as an angel of God, yea, as Christ Jesus himself, shall receive a righteous man's reward, *i. e.* salvation; meaning, if he shall continue in the same mind, and frame of heart, unto the end, as we have formerly interpreted such promises of God, by express warrant from the Scriptures themselves. When he tells them that he is afraid of them, lest he should have bestowed on them labour in vain, chap. iv. 11, his meaning, doubtless, is not that he was

afraid they would lose or make shipwreck of an unsound, light, or hypocritical faith, (such losses, whether of our own or of our friends, are no matter of fear unto us,) but of such a faith, which persevered in would have saved them. And, to forbear other passages which might readily be produced upon the same account, when he speaks thus unto them, "Ye are abolished from Christ, whosoever are justified by the law," (*i. e.* depend upon the works of the law for your justification,) "ye are fallen from grace." And again, "Ye did run well, who hindered you that you should not obey the truth?" Gal. v. 4—7. He clearly supposeth that they had been true believers. If they were now fallen from grace, which the apostle clearly affirmeth they were, by depending upon the works of the law for their justification, it must needs follow that sometimes they were possessed of it and were the children of grace, which also their running well undeniably importeth. "Whereas therefore," saith Musculus upon the place, "he saith that the Galatians ran well, he commendeth their zeal and studiousness in the *true faith* and religion of Christ; signifying withal, that they might have attained or reached the mark of true blessedness, had they persevered in that which they had well begun;"\* with more of like import. Let other orthodox expositors be consulted upon these latter, together with the former passages, mentioned by way of proof, that these Galatians were sometimes true and sound believers, and they will be found to carry the sense of them to the same point. On the other hand, several of the said passages, with some others, do as plainly and pregnantly suppose, that at the writing of the said epistle unto them they were wholly alienated from Christ, and had neither part nor fellowship in the great business of justification by him. They were removed from him that had called them into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel. They were abolished from Christ, they were fallen from grace, they did not obey the truth. Calvin, upon the first of these expressions, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed," &c., writeth thus, "He convinceth them of a defection, not only from his doctrine, but from Christ himself; for men cannot hold Christ upon any other terms than by acknowledging, that by his benefit they are freed from the bondage of the law."† Upon the second, "Ye are abolished from Christ," &c., thus, "The meaning is, if you seek for any part or piece of righteousness in the works of the law, Christ becomes nothing to you, and you are aliens from grace. For their opinion was not so gross, as that they thought they should be justified by the alone observation of the law; but they mingled *Christ* and the law together, otherwise

\* Cum itaque Galatas bene cucurrisset dicit, laudat illorum zelum ac studium in vera fide ac religione Christi: significatque potuisse eos ad verae felicitatis ac salutis metam pertinere, si in eo, quod bene coeperant, perseverassent. Qui a principiis fidei, ac spiritus boni ad perfidiam degenerant, omnem suam vitam, quae veniae particeps erat, mortalem constituunt: quales illi sunt, qui cum Galatis spiritu quidem incipiunt, tandem vero carne desinunt.—*Idem, loc. de Peccato, sect. 5.*

† Arguit autem eos defectionis, non a sua doctrina tantum, sed a Christo. Nam Christum tenere aliter non poterant, quam si agnoscerent ejus beneficio nos manumissos esse a servitute legis.

*Paul* should have had no ground to terrify them with such threatenings as these. What do you mean? you take a course to make Christ unprofitable to you, you bring his grace to nothing. Thus then we see that we cannot place, no not the least part of our righteousness in the law, but we renounce *Christ* and his grace.\* Amongst several other passages looking the same way, *Musculus* upon the former of the last recited places commenteth in these words, "He had planted the Galatians, and watered them diligently by preaching the gospel of God unto them, and hoped that it would so have come to pass that they would have increased in the knowledge and *grace of Christ*. But whilst he thus hopeth and wisheth, they are transplanted or removed from him, in whom they had been planted."† The truth is, that several expressions and carriages in the epistle are so pregnant on the one hand, to evince and prove that time was when they were true and sound believers; and several others, as pregnant as they on the other hand, to prove them at the writing hereof to have been mere nullifidians, or persons void of all true justifying faith, that expositors could not lightly but speak them sometimes true believers, whilst they had the former places before them, and afterwards, persons wholly lapsed from such faith, when they had the latter. The case concerning these Galatians being so evident, we shall argue it no further, but conclude with a brief report of *M. Luther's* judgment upon it. "At first," saith he, "the Galatians heard and obeyed the truth. Therefore, when *Paul* saith, 'Who hath bewitched you?' he signifieth, that now being bewitched by the false apostles, they had *fallen away* from and forsaken that truth which formerly they had obeyed."‡ Not long after: "He had said before, that seeking justification by the law, they cast away the grace of God; and that Christ died for them in vain. Here he adds, that such persons crucify Christ, who had formerly lived and reigned in them. As if he should say, you have not only *cast away the grace of God*, it is not only true that Christ died for you in vain, but that he is most unworthily crucified in (by or amongst) you."§ Afterwards: "The righteousness of the law, which *Paul* here calls the flesh, is so far from justifying men, that they, who after they have received the Spirit, by the

\* Sensus est, si quam justitiæ partem queritis in operibus legis, Christus nihil ad vos, et à gratiâ estis alienati. Neque enim tam crassa erat opinio, ut solâ legis observatione justificari se crederent: sed Christum miscebant cum lege: alioquî frustra à his minis territaret ipsos *Paulus*: Quid facitis? redditis vobis Christum inutilem, in nihilum redigitis ejus gratiam. Videmus ergo non posse minimam justitiæ partem constitui in lege, quin Christo et ejus gratiæ renuntietur.

† Plantaverat Galatas, et rigaverat diligenter, per Evangelii Dei prædicationem, sperabatque fore, ut crescerent in cognitione et gratiâ Christi. Dum hoc sperat et optat, illi, ab eo, in quo plantati fuerant, transponuntur, &c.

‡ Primò Galatæ audierant, et obedierant veritati. Idèd cum dicit, Quis vos fascinavit? significat eos per pseudapostolos fascinatos, nunc à veritate, cui antea obedierant, defecisse, ac eam deseruisse: in *Gal.* iii. 1.

§ Suprà dixit, querentes justitiâ ex lege, abjicere gratiam Dei; item, illis Christum gratis mortuum fuisse. Hic verò addit, quòd tales crucifigant Christum, qui antea vixit et regnavit in ipsa. Quasi dicat, jam non solum abjecistis gratiam Dei, non solum Christus frustra vobis mortuus est, sed turpissimè in vobis crucifixus.—*Ibid.*

hearing of faith, make a defection unto it, are consummated by it, *i. e.* are made an end of and destroyed utterly.\* To conclude upon those words, chap. v. 4, "Ye are fallen from grace," *i. e.* saith he "ye are no longer in the kingdom of grace. He that falleth from grace, simply (and absolutely) loseth expiation (or atonement), remission of sins, righteousness, liberty, and that life, which Christ by his death and resurrection has merited for us."† Many other passages of like import with these, might readily be cited from this author in his commentaries upon this epistle. So that there is little question to be made, but that Luther abounded in this sense, *viz.*, that persons truly justified, and in present possession of that righteousness, justification, life, which Christ merited for them, may yet fall away totally from this grace, and to destruction; and that he looked upon the Galatians, as Paul describes them in their different postures, first of faith, then of falling away, as perfect instances to evince the truth of such a doctrine.

I shall conclude the chapter in hand with a brief survey of that place, formerly mentioned, "For some are already turned aside after Satan," 1 Tim. v. 15. These words, Calvin, in his commentaries upon them, dilateth thus: "This expression, after Satan, is observable; because no man can turn aside from Christ, though it be never so little, but he follows Satan. For he reigneth over all who are not Christ's. Hence we are admonished how destructive a thing it is to turn aside from a straight course, which *of the sons of God makes us slaves of the devil.*"‡ So that his sense upon the place clearly is, that the persons here said to have turned aside after Satan, were before this their turning aside, the children of God, and therefore true believers; and that by means of their turning aside, and after it, they were the slaves of the devil; which implies a total defection, at least, from Christ and their faith. I desire the reader to take knowledge once more upon occasion of the passage now transcribed from Calvin, that he was not so absolute or entire in his judgment for an impossibility of a total declining in the saints, as the friends of this notion commonly presume, or as if he never expressed his judgment to the contrary. In the words lately cited, he expressly grants and supposeth, that of the children of God men may be made or become the slaves of Satan. And that the persons spoken of in the Scripture in hand, were, as he supposeth, true believers, is evident from hence, *viz.* that they are said to have turned aside, or to have been turned aside, after Satan. If they had been unsound or hypocritical Christians before, they could not, by falling

\* Aded ergo justitia legis, quam Paulus hic carnem vocat, non justificat, ut hi qui, post acceptum Spiritum per fidei auditum, ad eam deficiunt, eam consumuntur, hoc est, finiantur, et prorsus perdantur.—*Ad. Gal. iii. 3.*

† A gratiâ excidistis, *i. e.* non amplius estis in regno gratiæ.—Qui excidit à gratiâ, amittit simpliciter expiationem, remissionem peccatorum, justitiam, libertatem, vitam, &c., quam Christus suâ morte et resurrectione nobis emeruit.

‡ Post Satanam; notanda loquutio, quia nemo potest vel tantillum à Christo deflectere, quin Satanam sequatur. Nam regnum in omnes habet, qui Christi non sunt. Hinc admonemur, quàm exitialis sit deflexio à recto cursu, quæ ex Dei filiis nos facit Satanæ mancipia.

into any other course of impiety, be said to have turned aside or out of the way\* after Satan; because men and women follow Satan as much, as directly, as close, by walking in ways of hypocrisy, and rottenness of profession, as in ways of uncleanness, or of any other unrighteousness whatsoever. Therefore certainly the way, out of which they turned aside to walk after Satan, was the way of a true faith, and of a life answerable thereunto. And that a "turning aside after Satan," imports a total deserting of Christ, or a total deprivation and loss of that interest which a person had in Christ before, is richer in evidence than to need proof. Nor do I find any one expositor, who, casting up the expression, finds it to amount to any whit less.

## CHAPTER XV.

*Declaring the sense and judgment, as well of the ancient fathers of the church as of modern reformed divines, touching the point of perseverance; and so concluding the digression concerning this subject.*

IT is a vanity whereunto the tongues and pens of learned men, being once engaged and declared for an opinion, especially in matters of religion, are much subject unto, to cast undue aspersions upon, and so to create undeserved prejudice unto, all such doctrines or opinions which are inconsistent with that opinion which themselves are known to hold and to have maintained. Amongst other weapons of this warfare, the arrow of this reproach is most frequently unquivered, and let fly: if men can find that any opinion which hath the least semblance or sympathy, though but in sound of words only, with that which opposeth theirs, hath either been held by any former heretic, or person voted erroneous, or else opposed by those unto whose lot it is fallen to be surnamed orthodox, they make an importune outcry against this opinion, I mean which opposeth theirs, as if it were nothing but an old infamous error, held only by heretics and erroneous men, but stigmatised and cast out of the church by the orthodox long ago. The truth is, that neither the one consideration nor the other, no, not when they are real, and not in pretence or presumption only, I mean neither the asserting of an opinion by men in many things erroneous, nor the disowning of it by men in most things, and in the main, orthodox, are any demonstrative grounds of the unsoundness of this opinion, or that it is not from God. How much less when that opinion indeed, which suffers rebuke from men upon such terms, was neither taught nor held by the one, nor rejected or opposed by the other, but only an opinion in some outward lineaments somewhat like unto it, but in heart and substance of matter altogether differing from it? The doctrine of election or predestination unto life from foreseen faith,

\* Ἐξετραπισιν.

or works, is commonly decried and made odious unto men upon this pretence, that it was a doctrine held by Pelagians and semi-Pelagians, and condemned and cast out of the church for an error by all the orthodox fathers long since. Whereas it is evident from the records of antiquity, that the opinion concerning predestination from foreseen faith or works, which was held by the Pelagians, and rejected by the orthodox fathers, was not simply this, that God predestinated those unto life whom he foresaw would believe or live holily, but whom he foresaw would believe, or live holily, out of the strength or abilities of nature. The orthodox fathers themselves held and taught predestination from foreseen faith and holiness, as well as the Pelagians, but with this difference: The fathers taught it, from the foresight of such a faith and holiness which men should be enabled unto by grace; the Pelagians, from such, whether faith or holiness, which men should raise or exhibit by the strength of nature. This is evident from what Gerardus Vossius, a diligent and faithful surveyor of antiquity, demonstrateth in the sixth book of his Pelagian history. "The Greek fathers," saith he, "always, and all the Latin fathers who lived before Austin, are wont to say, that they are predestinated unto life whom God foresaw would live godly and well; or, as some others speak, whom he foresaw would believe and persevere, who should believe on him to eternal life, 1 Tim. i. 16. Which they so interpret as to say, that predestination unto glory is made (by God) according to his foreknowledge of faith and perseverance. But they did not mean the foresight or foreknowledge of such things which a man was to do by the abilities of nature, but by the strength and assistance of grace, as well preventing as subsequent. So that this consent of antiquity no ways helpeth either the Pelagians or semi-Pelagians (in their cause.) For both these held, that the cause of predestination is assignable on man's part, according to all the effects of it; whereas the orthodox fathers acknowledge, that the first (or preventing) grace is conferred, not of merit, but freely. So that their opinion was, that there was no cause assignable on man's part of predestination unto preventing grace,"\* &c. This to have been the true and clear difference between the ancient orthodox fathers and the Pelagians and semi-Pelagians touching the point of predestination, he showeth with a high hand of evidence and proof from several passages cited out of the authors themselves in the prosecution and proof of his said thesis.

\* Græci patres semper, patrum Latinorum verò illi, qui ante Augustinum vixerunt, dicere solent, eos esse prædestinatos ad vitam, quos Deus piè rectèque victuros prævidit; sive, ut alii loquuntur, quos prævidit credituros, et perseveraturos, τοὺς μέλλοντας πιστεύειν ἐπ' αὐτῶ εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον, ut est 1 Tim. i. Quod ita interpretantur, ut prædestinatio ad gloriam facta dicatur, secundum præscientiam fidei et perseverantiæ. Verum non intellexerunt præscientiam eorum, quæ homo acturus erat ex viribus naturæ, sed quæ esset facturus ex viribus gratiæ, tum prævenientis, tum subsequentis; eoque antiquitatis ille consensus nihil, vel Pelagianos, vel semi-Pelagianos juvat. Nam utrique illi crediderunt prædestinationis causam dari ex parte hominis secundum omnes effectus. At Catholici agnoverunt, gratiam primam, non ex merito, sed gratis conferri. Quare nec putârunt, ex parte hominis, causam dari prædestinationis ad gratiam prævenientem, &c.—*Gerard. Johan. Vossius, Hist. Pelag. lib. vi. thes. 8.*

As the doctrine of predestination from foreseen faith and perseverance, as it is at this day held and taught by some, (which yet is none of my sense or opinion, as I may have occasion, I conceive, more particularly to declare in the progress of the work in hand,) is unjustly traduced, as if it savoured of Pelagianism, and had been long since thrown out of the church by all orthodox antiquity, whereas it was the express doctrine, as we have heard, generally held and taught by them; so is the doctrine of conditional perseverance, and which asserteth an amissibility of grace and true faith, both total and final, most unduly and unworthily branded with this reproach, that it is a rotten Popish error, and was never held by orthodox men. We shall, therefore, in the former part of this chapter, wipe off this aspersion, and prove by express testimonies, and these not a few, that this doctrine was a branch of the faith of the primitive Christians, and of those who were, and are at this day, esteemed to have been the most orthodox and sound in their generation. Some testimonies of this import we have already, as I remember, cited upon other occasions in the preceding part of this discourse; and to save transcriptions as much as with convenience may be, we shall not repeat the words of any author which have been already expressed, but only give the sense of the said words in English, and for the words themselves, send you to those quarters of the discourse where they are lodged, and easy to be found. We shall do the like in the latter part of this chapter, in respect of such testimonies from modern writers, which have been already presented in the express words of their respective authors upon another account.

In the first place I shall account unto the reader what the fore-mentioned author, Gerard Vossius, delivers, in his said Pelagian History, for the sense and judgment of orthodox antiquity in the present question about perseverance: "From this additament of Austin's opinion," saith he, speaking of what this father had added to the common doctrine of those who had gone before him, touching perseverance, which he had expressed in his former thesis, "it is manifest enough that both Austin and Prosper, and Pelagius, with his followers, agreed in this, that justifying faith and regenerating grace may be lost, and that they are lost by very many." A little after: "Therefore they understand not the doctrine or judgment of antiquity who, when they read in Augustin and others that the elect of God either never fall away, or else that they return to God before they die, from hence infer that their opinion was, that true believers either always persevere in faith, or at least never fall away utterly from the grace of God. Whose arguing leans upon this supposition, that true believers and the elect are terms convertible; whereas, according to Augustin's doctrine, not true believers, but true believers persevering, and elect, are reciprocable. Yea, the whole dispute which Augustin had with Pelagius and the Massilienses, about the perseverance of the saints, stands upon a contrary hypothesis. For unless it be granted, that some true believers and

godly ones do depart (from God,) and not return, do fall, and not rise again, this question, why some of these persevere, others not, is at an end before it begin; and yet this was the question so hotly disputed between Augustin and his adversaries. Yea, the truth is, that all antiquity jointly opposeth that indefectibility (of the saints, which some defend.) Nor is there any of the ancients to be found who, as far as I am able to call to mind, conceiveth that believers have any absolute certainty of their perseverance. They indeed acknowledge that the minds of the children of God ought not to be tortured with any anxiety of doubting, inasmuch as they have a confidence of hope, which may sustain and keep up with sufficient comfort those that may fall, and relieve those that are already fallen. But yet they deny that any man, because he certainly knows that he is at present in the number of true believers, can therefore promise unto himself, upon any certainty, such or so much favour from God for the remaining part of his life, that he may be as bold as if he had it by revelation from God, that he shall never incur the guilt of adultery, murder, idolatry, though David, Solomon, and others, declined so fearfully from the ways of God as they did; or, in case he shall fall into such horrible sins with them, that he also shall have the time of his life prolonged as David had, until, upon his serious repentance, he be reconciled unto God. Such an absolute certainty as this they affirm to be inexpedient in this life, being obnoxious to so many temptations, and where the weakness of men is such that, unless there be a continual solicitousness and care to keep that grace which we have once received, a carnal security will most easily steal upon us, through which, as by a broad gate wide opened, whole troops of vices are like to convey themselves into us.\*

\* Ex altero hoc Augustinianæ sententiæ additamento, satis clarè liquet, tam Augustinum et Prosperum, quàm Pelagium et ejus reliquias, super eo convenisse, quòd fides justificans, et gratia regenerans, amitti possit, et à perlisque amittatur.

Et paulò post: Neutiquam igitur antiquitatis mentem assequuntur, qui cum apud Augustinum et alios legunt, electos Dei, vel deficere nunquam, vel ad Deum antè obitum redire, inde colligunt, ex eorum sententiâ fideles semper in fide perseverare, aut saltem nunquam penitentiâ divinâ gratiâ excidere. Quorum argumentum hac nititur hypothesi, quòd fideles et electi ἀντιστρέφουσι, cum juxtà Augustinum non receduntur electi et fideles, sed fideles perseverantes. Imò omnis disputatio illa, quæ Augustino cum Pelagio et Massiliensibus de perseverantiâ sanctorum fuit, hypothesin plane contrariam habet. Nam nisi concedatur quosdam fidelium et piorum deficere, nec redire; cadere, nec surgere, cessabit penitentiâ hæc quæstio, cur aliqui eorum perseverant, aliqui non item; de quo inter Augustinum et adversarios tantoperè disceptatum fuit. Quid quod antiquitas tota indefectibilitati adversatur, nec quenquam, quantum meminisse valemus, veterum invenire est, qui fideles omnes omnimodam de perseverantiâ suâ certitudinem habere arbitraretur. Fatentur quidem, animos filiorum Dei dubitationis anxietate cruciari non debere, cum spei fiduciam habeant, quæ sufficienti consolatione et lapsuros sustentet, et lapsos levet: at nihilominus negant, posse quemvis, ex inde quòd impræsentiarum fidelium se in numero esse sciat, tantum sibi de reliquo vitæ tempore favorem Dei pro certo polliceri, ut tanquam divinâ revelatione de se eductus spondere ausit, nunquam se adulterii, homicidii, idololatriæ reum fore, quanquam David, Solomon, alii tantoperè à viis Domini declinârunt: vel, si cum illis in tantum scelus prolabatur, tum, uti Davidi, ita sibi quoque prorogatum iri vitæ tempus, usque dum seriò penitentiam egerit, et reconcilietur Deo. Cujusmodi omnimodam certitudinem negant expedire in hac vita tot tentationibus obnoxiiâ, ubi tanta est infirmitas, ut, nisi perpetua adsit sollicitudo custodiendi gratiam, quam semel acceperimus, facillimè obrepit carnis securitas; per quam velut bipatentibus portis, undique vitiorum se insinuent catervæ.—  
*Gerard. Johan. Vossius, Hist. Pelag., lib. vi. Theis. 12.*

Thus far Vossius, who in the words mentioned comprehendeth the clear and unquestionable sense of the primitive faith, and of the most orthodox fathers, for several hundreds of years next after Christ and the apostles, concerning the point of perseverance; and therefore subjoineth in the entrance of his demonstration of the said thesis words to this effect: "That the sense and opinion expressed (touching the perseverance of believers) was the common opinion of antiquity, they only at this day can deny who, though in other matters they may possibly be men learned enough, yet are altogether strangers in antiquity, or else have their minds and judgments so mancipated (or enslaved) to the opinions of this man or that, that they choose rather to see with their eyes than their own, and prefer a going astray with them, before walking in ways of truth with other men."\* And whereas some pretend, that when the fathers say that grace or faith may be lost, they speak not of true grace, or of true faith, but of that which is feigned, the said author, in the process of his discourse, resolves this pretence into smoke, and evidently proves the doctrine of the fathers to have been, that even true faith, and that which justifieth, and makes men at present true children of God, and which in the nature of it is saving, may be utterly and for ever lost. And whereas some passages are found in their writings, wherein they say that true faith may indeed be lost, but is always recovered again before death; and in some others that faith cannot be lost; to this he clearly answereth, by that distinction of three several degrees of faith, which they still suppose, affirming, that in passages of the former import, they speak only of faith of the second degree, *i. e.* of such faith which is not only justifying and saving, in respect of the nature of it, but which actually saveth; and in places of the latter import, that they speak only of faith of the third and highest degree, *i. e.* of a perfect, solid, rooted, and grounded faith. For the reader's better satisfaction, I shall exhibit unto him the author's own words at large. "This, nevertheless, is to be taken into special consideration, that when the fathers affirm that faith may be lost, and therefore that eternal election cannot rightly be inferred from faith, they do not all speak of any measure or degree of faith whatsoever, since many of them distinguish three several degrees of faith. The first of which gives essence, or truth of being unto faith, in respect whereof it justifieth, and is called a lively faith: opposite hereunto is a dead and putatitious," *i. e.* an imaginary "faith, which is proper to hypocrites. The next degree adds duration," or perseverance, "in respect whereof it saveth," *i. e.* becomes actually saving: "opposite to this faith is that which we commonly call temporary, (attributing that improperly unto men's faith, which the Scripture attributes to men themselves,) which is

\* Communem fuisse antiquitatis sententiam quam diximus, soli hodie negare possunt, qui cætera fortasse viri sunt non ineruditi, sed in antiquitate tamen plane sunt hospites; vel animum habet unius et alterius sententiis ita mancipatum, ut eorum oculis videre malint quam suis, cunq̄ue iis errare præoptent, quam cum aliis bene sentire.

the faith of apostates. The third," and last "degree, superaddeth solidity: this faith is termed perfect, solid, rooted, which any time of a man's life gives him assurance; *i. e.* to use the words of Gregory the Great, doth so confirm," or strengthen, "that a man cannot fall afterwards, and knoweth this most certainly of himself. To this degree of faith a weak faith is opposed, which is the faith of many of the elect. Those passages of the fathers, wherein they say that true faith may be lost, but is always recovered again, always speak of the second degree of faith. But those, where they say that such faith cannot be lost, must necessarily be understood of the third and highest degree of faith. Between which expressions, and what they generally teach otherwise, *viz.* that many perish eternally, through a falling away from their faith, there is no repugnance. For in such assertions as this, they understand faith of the first degree, *i. e.* such a faith which is formally and essentially true, or, which is the same, which is justifying, though not" actually or in the event "saving, but justifying in the essence or substance of it, in respect whereof a man is at present righteous or just; not justifying in respect of continuance; since if we consider the truth of the end, that faith is not truly justifying, which at any time ceaseth to justify: because no other faith hath the promise of eternal life, but only that which persevereth."\*

By the express tenor of these things, it fully appears, that the uniform and constant opinion of all orthodox antiquity was, that true faith, true grace, true justification, and forgiveness of sins, may, by security, carelessness, ungodliness, and profaneness of life and conversation, be totally and finally lost, and the persons in whom they were sometimes found, eternally perish. As for that which some of them teach, concerning the inamissibility or infallible perseverance of such a faith, which is perfected and radicated in the soul so thoroughly, and to such a degree, as we have heard expressed, were it granted that they speak of a simple and absolute inamissibility in this kind, and that their meaning is, that there is an utter impossibility, and not a great difficulty or improbability

\* Illud interim maximè in considerationem venit, quòd cum Patres fidem posse amitti, eòque ex fide haud rectè æternam electionem colligi posse contendunt, non omnes de quacunque fidei mensurâ loquuntur: cum plurimi eorum distinguant tres fidei gradus. Quorum primus dat fidei essentialiam, secundùm quam justificat, et dicitur fides viva, atque oppositam habet fidem mortuam ac putatitiam, qualis hypocritarum. Alter gradus addit durationem, quâ ratione salvificat; sibi que oppositam habet fidem (ut vulgò loquimur, quod de hominibus dicit Scriptura, fidei eorum per *κατάρχησιν* tribuentes) πρόσκαιρον, sive temporariam, qualis est apostatarum. Tertius gradus superaddit soliditatem, et dicitur perfecta, solida, radicata, quæ quocunque vitæ tempore certificat: hoc est, ut Gregorii Magni verbis utar, sic confirmat, ut quis ulterius cadere non possit, et hoc de sese certissimè sciat. Cui gradui opponitur fides debilis, qualis etiam multorum est electorum. Patrum loca, quibus dicunt, fidem veram quidem amitti posse, sed nunquam non reparari, semper loquuntur de secundo fidei gradu. At illa, quibus aiunt, neutiquam posse amitti, omninò intelligi debent de gradu tertio. Cum quibus minimè pugnat, quòd universi aliàs dicunt, multos per defectionem à fide æternùm perire. Nam intelligunt fidem primi gradus; hoc est, formaliter sive essentialiter veram; sive, quod idem est, justificam, etsi non salvificam, sed justificam *κατ' οὐσίαν*, per quam quis in præsentia est justus, non justificam *κατ' ἐπιμονήν*, quando si veritatem finis spectemus, verè justificam non est, quæ aliquando desinit justificare: quia non alia habet promissionem vitæ æternæ, quam quæ perseverat.—*Gerard. Joh. Voss. Hist. Pelag. lib. vi. Thes. 13.*

only, that such a faith should miscarry, or no instance producible to prove that such a faith ever did miscarry, it no ways rebuketh the confidence of that assertion, which we have in this present chapter, and elsewhere in the discourse formerly avouched; viz. that a possibility of the falling away of true saints, and true believers, and that both totally and finally, was the general and joint doctrine of the primitive Christians for several ages together after Christ. The consideration whereof is abundantly sufficient to stop the mouth of that undue pretext, which presumeth to say, and that with confidence, that the best and most conscientious men were always of this judgment, that true grace is imperishable, and true believers under no possibility of miscarrying finally. But of this we spake more at large in the ninth chapter. I here only add: That when any of the ancient fathers or councils express themselves in words of any such import as this, that there is or may be a faith so raised, rooted, or strongly built that it cannot either totally or finally miscarry, it is no ways probable that their meaning should be, that there is an utter, simple, or logical impossibility, that such a faith should be wholly lost, but that they rather speak rhetorically, and would be understood of a kind of moral impossibility only, which imports a great difficulty, improbability, or rareness of an event: in which sense or notion the Scriptures themselves, (as knowledge hath been given elsewhere,) \* are wont to term things impossible, or such which cannot be.

Lest any man should be jealous, either of the sufficiency of the author, from whom we have taken the survey of the judgment of antiquity in the question in hand, to make a true and perfect account of such a business, or of his sincerity in giving it in, let antiquity herself speak, and plead her own cause with her own lips. And first we shall give you a brief taste of the sense of some of the best authors, who lived and wrote before Pelagius was heard of in the world: and then of such who lived with him and after him. "But because," saith Irenæus, who lived about the 172<sup>nd</sup> year after Christ, "all men are of the same nature," or kind, "having power as well to hold," or keep, "as to work," or do, "that which is good, and power again *to lose it, and not to do it*, some are justly, even with understanding men, how much more with God commended, and receive a worthy testimony of a good election," or choice, "and of a continuance therein: others again are accused," or condemned, "and receive a just" retribution in "damage, because they *rejected*," or put away from them, "that which is just and good."† This author clearly supposeth, that all men have power by nature, (he means, as is easily collected from other places in his writings, by nature, as it is generally recruited, or relieved and strengthened,

\* See Chap. X. p. 274, and Chap. XII. p. 388.

† Sed quoniam omnes ejusdem sunt naturæ, et potentes retinere et operari bonum, et potentes rursum amittere id, et non facere justè, apud homines sensatos, quantum magis apud Deum, alii quidem laudantur, et dignum percipiunt testimonium electionis bonæ, et perseverantiæ, alii verò accusantur, et dignum percipiunt damnum, eò quod justum et bonum reprobaverunt.  
— *Iren. adversus Hæres.* lib. iv. cap. 74. circa initium.

by the grace of God in Christ,) both to retain and work that which is good, perseveringly, and again to throw it off and recede from it, yea, so as finally to perish in such their declinings.

Tertullian, who wrote about the year 195, declareth his judgment in the point to this effect: "Whatever it be that my mean abilities have attempted in reference to an entering upon and holding out in a course of repentance, doth indeed concern all those that have addicted themselves unto the Lord as persons who all seek after safety," or salvation, "by pleasing God; but it concerns those more nearly who are yet novices, and beginning very diligently to water their ears with the words of God, like young whelps whose sight is not yet perfectly come to them, move up and down at uncertainty, and profess," or learn, "indeed to renounce their old ways, and take up repentance, but neglect to inclose it;"\* *i. e.* to guard or fence it with resolution and care, that it may not be laid waste by the return and breaking in of the lusts of their former ignorance upon them. Not long after, thus: "Some are of opinion as if God must of necessity give that which he hath promised, even to those that are unworthy, and thus make his bounty a servitude or bondage" unto him. "But if he gratifieth us" with or by "the symbol of death," meaning, if he confers upon us forgiveness of sins, in or upon our being baptized, wherein we typically die with Christ, "out of necessity, he doth it against his will. And who will suffer that to continue or remain firm which he giveth unwillingly? For, *do not many afterwards fall away? Is not this gift taken away from many?*"† He clearly speaks of the gift of justification or remission of sins, which the ancient fathers more generally held and taught was conferred in baptism, at least where there was any meetness in the person baptized. But whether this be orthodox or no, evident it is, from the words recited, that Tertullian's judgment was, that many may, yea, and do, fall away, and suffer the deprivation and loss of the grace of justification, according to what we reasoned at large, Chap. viii., and consequently of regeneration also.

Gregory Nazianzen, famous in the Christian church about the year 375, expresseth the received doctrine in his times, concerning the subject in debate, in such passages as these: "Take heed thou keepest thy cleanness, lest otherwise thou beest sick again of thy flux of blood, and shalt not be able to take hold

\* *Quicquid ergo mediocritas nostra ad pœnitentiam semel capessendam et perpetuò continendam suggerere conata est, omnes quidem deditos Domino spectat, ut omnis (omnes) salutis in promerendo Deo petitores; sed præcipuè novitiis istis imminet, qui cum maximè incipiunt divinis sermonibus aures rigare, quique catuli infantis adhuc recentis, nec perfectis luminibus, incerta reptant: et dicunt (discunt) pristinis quidem renunciare, et pœnitentiam assumunt, sed includere eam negligunt.—Tertul. de Pœn. cap. vi.*

† *Quidam autem sic opinantur, quasi Deus necesse habeat præstare etiam indignis, quod sponndit, et liberalitatem ejus faciunt servitutem. Quod si necessitate nobis symbolum mortis indulget, ergo invitus facit. Quis enim permittit permansurum id, quod tribuerit invitus? Non enim multi postea excidunt? Nonne à multis donum illud aufertur? &c.—Ibid.*

on Christ, so as to steal," or secretly obtain, "a cure from him." A little after: "Take heed, lest, by committing sin, thou liest again in thy bed, I mean, in the evil and pestilential ease" or quiet "of a body broken and dissolved with pleasures. But go thy ways as thou art, and remember this saying, 'Behold, thou art made whole; now sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee,' in case thou shalt be found wicked after" such "a benefit received. Thou hast heard this great voice, 'Lazarus, come forth,' whilst yet thou layest in the grave, (for what is more vocal or audible than the word,) and art come forth, after thou hadst been dead, not four days only, but many more, returning unto life with him that lay three days in the grave, and having thy grave-clothes," or death-bands, "loosed. Take heed lest thou diest again, and beest gathered unto those who dwell in the graves, and beest the second time bound with the cords of thy sins: for it is uncertain whether thou shalt be raised up again unto life, or no." And yet again, some few passages interjected: "Only be careful, and look to this, that having with the purity" of thy heart and ways "kindled a fire of envy in the devil's breast" against thee, "thou makest not thyself miserable again by sinning."\* The comport of those passages with the doctrine of a possibility both of a total and final declining in the saints, is so express and full, that it needs no light of argument to become visible.

Chrysostom, a principal pillar, amongst those made of flesh and blood, of the Christian church, about the year 382, speaketh plainly and without parable the same things with the former, and that frequently. We formerly cited words from him which made this English sound: "Although the graces and gifts of God are without repentance, yet malice," or wickedness, "prevailed so far as to dissolve this law. What then is there of more grievous consequence than to remember injuries, which appears to be a subverter" and destroyer "of so great a gift of God," meaning, justification or remission of sins.† This father, in his seventh and eighth sermons or orations, inscribed "Unto Theodorus fallen from a virtuous life,"‡ supposeth this as the basis or ground-work of the greatest part of these buildings, viz. that he that is, or hath been, a worthy saint and true believer, may

\* *Fac purgationem serves, ne alioquì sanguinis defluvio rursus labores, Christumque jam surripiendæ salutis causâ, prehendere nequeas.—Cave ne amisso peccato rursus in grabbato jaceas, hoc est, in corporis voluptatibus fracti ac dissoluti malâ et pestiferâ quiete. Verùm ut es, proficiscere, præcepti hujus es memor; Ecce sanus factus es; jam noli peccare, ne deuterius aliquid tibi accidat, si post acceptum beneficium malus inveniaris. Magnam hanc vocem, Lazare, veni forâs, in sepulchro jacens audisti (quid enim verbo vocalius et exaudibilis) ac prodiisti, non quadriduò, sed multis diebus mortuus, cum triduo illo simul ad vitam rediens, atque funebribus vinculis solutus es: cave ne rursus emoriaris, iisque, qui in sepulchris habitant, aggregeris, ac peccatorum tuorum funibus constringaris. Incertum enim est, an rursus è sepulchro ad vitam excitaberis, &c. Illud modò provideas, ne, cum puritate tuâ diabolum invidiæ facibus inflammariis, teipsum rursus per peccatum miserabilem reddas.—Gregor. Nazianz. Orat. xi.*

† See the author's words, Chap. VIII. p. 225.

‡ Πρὸς Θεόδωρον ἐκπεσόντα τοῦ ἐναγίου βίου

apostatise, and that to perdition; therefore, both totally and finally. Yea, the manner of the carriage of these orations, clearly import this to have been an unquestionable doctrine amongst Christians in those times. I shall only transcribe a passage or two towards the beginning of the latter of them, where the author, apologizing for the redundancy of his most passionate sorrow over his late Christian friend, Theodorus, who had grievously fallen, and was not yet risen again, and pleading that he had more cause to wish Jeremy's wish, Jer. ix. 1, than the prophet himself had, he expresseth himself thus: "For if one man who doth the will of the Lord be better than a thousand wicked ones, verily thou also wert better than myriads" or millions "of Jews. So that no man hath any reason to complain of me, if I have written more lamentations than that prophet, or have expressed more grievous pangs of sorrow than he. For I do not bewail the overthrow of a city, or the captivity of ungodly men, but the desolation of a sacred soul, the destruction, utter defacement and demolition of a temple wherein Christ dwelt. For he that had thoroughly known that furniture" or world "of thy mind, which now the devil hath burnt" and consumed, "whilst it yet shined" in its glory, "he would not have sorrowed reading the prophet's lamentations, and hearing that barbarous hands had defiled the holy of holies, and burnt all with fire, cherubims, ark, mercy-seat, tables of stone, golden candlestick, manna: for the calamity which is fallen upon thee is so much more bitter and grievous than that, by how much more precious the sacred things are which were reposed in thy soul. This was a more holy temple than that; for this did not shine with gold and silver, but with the grace of the Holy Ghost; and instead of cherubims and ark, had Christ, and his Father, and the Paraclete," or Comforter, "placed therein. But now it hath them not, but is desolate, and despoiled of all that beauty and comeliness, dismantled of those divine and inexpressible ornaments, and is become destitute of all means of safety or keeping. There is neither door nor bar to it, but it standeth open to all vile and soul-destroying thoughts."\*

\* *Και γὰρ εἰ κρείττων εἰς ποιῶν τὸ θέλημα Κυρίου, ἢ μύριοι παράνομοι, κρείττων ἄρα ἦσθα καὶ σὺ πρότερον τῶν μυριάδων τῶν Ἰουδαϊκῶν. Ὡστε οὐδεὶς ἂν μοι μέμφαιτο νῦν εἰ καὶ θρήνους τῶν ἐν τῷ προφήτῃ κειμένων πλείονας ἀναγράφαιμι, καὶ σφοδροτέρους ἐπιδείξαιμι ὀδυρμούς. Οὐ γὰρ πόλεως πενθῶ κατασκαφῆν οὐδὲ παρανόμων ἀνδρῶν αἰχμαλωσίαν, ἀλλὰ ψυχῆς ἐρήμωσιν ἱεράς, καὶ ναοῦ Χριστοφόρου καθαίρεισιν καὶ ἀφανισμόν. Τὸν γὰρ κόσμον τῆς διανοίας τῆς σῆς, ὃν κατέφλεξεν ὁ Διάβολος νῦν, εἶπῃ, ὅτε ἔλαμψεν, ἦδει καλῶς, οὐκ ἀνέστенаξε τοὺς θρήνους ἐπερχόμενος τοῦ προφήτου, καὶ ἀκούων, ὅτι χεῖρες βαρβαρικαὶ τὰ ἅγια τῶν ἁγίων ἐμόλυναν, καὶ πῦρ ἐπαφείσαι πάντα κατέκαυσαν, τὰ χερουβίμ, τὴν κιβωτὸν, τὸ ἰλαστήριον, τὰς πλάκας τὰς λιθίνας, τὴν σταμνὸν τὴν χρυσοῦν ἱερατικὸν ἅγιον ἔχουσαν τὸ μάνα; Αὕτη γὰρ, αὕτη ἢ συμφορὰ πικροτέρα ἐκείνης, ὅσῳ καὶ πολλῶ τιμωτέρα τούτων σύμβολα εἰς τὴν σὴν ἐναπέκειτο ψυχῆν. Οὗτος ἀγιώτερος ἐκείνου ὁ ναός. Οὐ γὰρ χρυσῷ καὶ ἀργύρῳ, ἀλλὰ τῇ τοῦ πνεύματος ἐναπιστίλβε χάριτι καὶ ἀντὶ τῶν χερουβίμ καὶ τῆς ἐκιωτοῦ, τὸν Χριστὸν, καὶ τὸν τούτου πατέρα καὶ τὸν παρακλητὸν εἶχεν ἰδρυμένον αὐτῷ. Ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκ ἔτι ἀλλ' ἔρημος μὲν καὶ γυμνὸς τοῦ κάλλους ἐκείνου καὶ τῆς εὐπρεπείας ἴσθι, τὸν θεῖον καὶ ἀρρήτῳ ἀπογυμνωθεὶς κόσμον, ἔρημος δὲ ἀσφαλείας ἀπάσης, καὶ φυλακῆς. Καὶ οὔτε θύρα, οὔτε μοχλός, ἀλλὰ πᾶσιν ἀνεφκται τοῖς ψυχοφθόροις λογισμοῖς.*

We need no commentary upon this text to discover the author's mind in it in reference to what is claimed from it: for he doth not only clearly hold forth herein his judgment in these touching the possibility of such a defection in the best of saints which is accompanied with destruction, but avoucheth a hypothesis or particular instance also, which proveth somewhat more than such a possibility, I mean, the act itself.

He that will please to read and consider what the same father likewise homilied upon John i. 12, may have yet a further sight of his judgment in the case. Here he demands, "Why the evangelist doth not say that he made them the sons of God, but that he gave them power to be made the sons of God?" giving this answer, that by this expression "he showed that it requires much diligence and labour to keep that image" or character "of adoption," or sonship, "which is formed in baptism unspotted and uncorrupted unto the end; signifying withal, that none shall be able to deprive us of this power, unless we ourselves first shall deprive ourselves of it:"\* which last words clearly suppose that men may deprive themselves of such a power, which God hath invested them with for the making themselves his sons, *i. e.* for the maintaining of themselves in this blessed relation unto the end. Concerning Judas, his opinion was, as is evident from several passages in his works, that he sometimes was the child of grace, a holy and good man. In the very beginning of his 52nd oration, extant in the fifth tome of his works, and intituled, "That he that stands ought not to be confident unto the end, nor he that is fallen to cast away hope,"† he hath these words: "Judas, my beloved, was at first a child of the kingdom, when he heard it" said to him, "with the disciples, You shall sit upon twelve thrones; but at last he became a child of hell."‡ You shall find him self-consistent in this opinion, in his 64th homily, upon Matt. chap. xix. 28, and also in his 67th oration or sermon concerning repentance, in the sixth tome his works.

A few lines after the pre-recited words concerning Judas, he subjoineth these: "For many, who having ascended the top" or height "of heaven," *i. e.* of heavenly perfection, "and shown all manner of abstinence, and chosen wildernesses" to live in, "and never so much as dreamed of a woman, by yielding a little unto slothfulness" or ease, "they were supplanted" and overthrown, "and came to the very gulf or bottom of all wickedness."§ It

\* Καὶ τί δήποτε οὐκ εἶπεν, ὅτι ἐποίησεν αὐτοὺς τέκνα Θεοῦ, ἀλλ' ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς ἔξουσίαν τέκνα Θεοῦ γενέσθαι; δεικνὺς ὅτι πολλῆς δεῖ τῆς σπουδῆς, ὥστε τὴν ἐν τῷ βαπτίσματι τῆς υἰοθεσίας ἡμῖν ἰκτυπωθεῖσαν εἰκόνα, ἀκηλίδωτον διόλου διατηρῆσαι, καὶ ἀνέπαφον· ἡμᾶ δὲ καὶ ἐμφαίνων, ὅτι τὴν ἔξουσίαν ταύτην οὐδεὶς ἡμᾶς ἀφείλεσθαι δύνησεται, εἰὰν μὴ προλαβόντες ἑαυτοὺς ἀφελώμεθα.

† Περὶ τοῦ ὅτι οὐ δεῖ μέχρι τέλους θαρρῆν τὸν ἰστώτα, οὔτε ἀπογινώσκειν ἑαυτοῦ τὸν πεπτωκότα.

‡ Ὁ Ἰούδας, ἀγαπητοί, υἱὸς βασιλείας τὸ πρῶτον ἦν, καὶ ἤκουσε μετὰ τῶν μαθητῶν. Ἐπὶ δώδεκα θρόνους καθεῖσθε· ἀλλὰ γέγονεν ὕστερον υἱὸς γέννης.

§ Καὶ γὰρ πολλοὶ εἰς αὐτὴν τὴν κορυφὴν ἀνελθόντες τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ πᾶσαν τὴν καρτερίαν ἐπιδειξάμενοι, καὶ τὰς ἐρήμους κατελιηφότες, καὶ οὐδὲ γυναῖκα ὄναρ

were easy to weary the reader, if it be not done already, with citations from this most renowned writer, wherein he declares with a high hand for that doctrine which teacheth a possibility of the saints' declining, and that unto death, both first and second; yea, and that upon such terms, that no man that shall impartially consider the manner how he expresseth himself in passages of this nature, but will conceive that this was the general doctrine of the Christian churches, and of the soundest teachers in those days.

Origen, who lived long before Chrysostom, viz. a little after the year 200, plainly enough delivers the said doctrine. "But if," saith he, "a satiety" or wearisomeness "overtaketh any of those who have stood in an eminent and perfect degree" of Christianity, "I do not conceive that such a one becomes a bankrupt" in grace, "or falls to nothing on a sudden, but that he must needs waste" or consume "by little and little, and by steps and degrees; so that it may sometimes come to pass, that if some short relapse" or fall "happeneth, and he speedily repenteth and cometh again to himself, that he doth not utterly ruin himself, but recovereth his foot and returns to his" former "state, and may repair that which through negligence is fallen down."\* He that speaketh such things as these, clearly supposeth that Christians and saints of the best and highest standing, may very possibly so fall as to ruin themselves utterly; yea, the passage importeth, that when such do begin to decline or fall, it is somewhat a rare case if ever they do recover or rise again. It is only the possibility, not probability, of this that is here asserted.

That Ambrose, who was contemporary with Augustin, though somewhat his senior in years, was of the same judgment with the forementioned authors in the doctrine of perseverance, may be sufficiently gathered from that interpretation of his, formerly cited from Musculus, of those words of Paul, "Shall I take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot?" The reader may please to satisfy himself herein only by looking back to Chap. xiii., page 434, of this present discourse. This father elsewhere saith: "God therefore foreknowing that they would be persons" evilly disposed or "of bad wills, did not account them in the number of good men, although our Saviour saith to those seventy-two disciples, whom he chose in the second rank, who afterwards went back from him, 'Your names are written in heaven.' But this was for" their "righteousness's sake; for it is meet that every man should have as he deserveth. For because they were good, they were

*ιδόντες, ῥαθυμήσαντες μικρόν ὑπισκεκλίσθησαν, καὶ πρὸς αὐτὸ ἦλθον τῆς κακίας τὸ βάραθρον.*

\* Si autem aliquando satietas cepit aliquem ex his, qui in summo perfectoque constiterint gradu, non arbitrator quòd ad subitum quis evacuetur, ac decidat, sed paulatim, et per partes eum defluere necesse est: ita ut fieri possit interdum, ut si brevis aliquis lapsus acciderit, et citò recipiscat, atque in se revertatur, non penitèns ruere, sed revocare pedem, et redire ad statum suum, et rursum statuere possit id, quod per negligentiam fuerat lapsum.—*Orig. Περὶ ἀρχῶν*, lib. i. cap. 3, in fine.

chosen to the ministry, and their names were written in heaven for" their "righteousness' sake, as I said, but according to the prescience" of God "they were in the number of evil men. There is no acceptation of persons in the prescience of God; for prescience is that wherein it is definitely known unto him of what kind every man's will, wherein he will persevere, will be by or for which he will either be damned or crowned. To conclude, they who God knows will persevere in good, are oftentimes before evil; and they who he knows will continue evil" unto their end "are sometimes good before. So that there is no cause for any man to complain, inasmuch as God is no acceptor of persons. For both Saul and Judas Iscariot were" at first or "before good, the Scripture saying of Saul, that he was a good man, and that there was not a better among the sons of Israel," so the vulgar Latin readeth, 1 Sam. ix. 2. "And the apostle Peter saith of Iscariot, He obtained fellowship in this ministration, with signs and wonders."\* In another place he saith: "Sometimes they are at first good, who afterwards become and continue evil; in which respect they are both said to be written in the book of life, and again to be blotted out of it."† Therefore neither was this father any patron of the doctrine of perseverance, as it is patronised by many at this day.

Cyprian, who lived about the year 250, writing upon the Lord's prayer, hath words to this effect: "And the servant, who having his whole debt forgiven him by his lord, would not forgive his fellow-servant, is cast into prison. Because he would not show favour to his fellow-servant, he *lost that favour*, which his lord had showed unto him."‡ By the favour which this servant lost, after it had been vouchsafed unto him by his lord, he clearly means the pardon of his sins. Therefore justification, or pardon of sin, may, according to the doctrine of this father, be lost, yea, so lost as never to be found again. The same author elsewhere saith, that "Solomon, and Saul, and many others," had power, "were able to retain the grace that had been given them, whilst they walked in the ways of the Lord; but when the" instruction or "discipline of God departed" from them, "his grace departed also. Therefore it stands

\* Præscius itaque Deus malæ voluntatis futuros, non illos habuit in numero bonorum, quamvis dicat Salvator illis septuaginta duobus discipulis, quos elegerat secundâ classe, qui ab illo postea recesserunt, Nomina vestra scripta sunt in cælo. Sed hoc propter justitiam, quia hoc est justum, ut unicuique pro merito respondeatur. Quia enim boni erant, electi erant ad ministerium, et erant scripta nomina illorum in cælo propter justitiam, sicut dixi: secundum præscientiam verò erant in numero malorum. Non est personarum acceptio in præscientiâ Dei: præscientia enim est, quæ definitum habet qualis uniuscujusque voluntas erit, in quâ mansurus est, per quam aut damnetur, aut coronetur. Denique quos scit in bono mansuros, frequentè ante sunt mali: et quos malos scit permansuros, aliquoties prius sunt boni. Unde cessat querela, quia Deus acceptor personarum non est. Nam et Saul et Judas Scarioth ante fuerunt boni, dicente Scripturâ de Saul, Erat vir bonus, et non erat illo melior in filiis Israel. Et de Scarioth dicit Petrus apostolus, Qui sortitus est sortem ministerii hujus, in signis et prodigiis faciendis, etc.—*Ambr. in Rom. ix. 13.*

† Aliquoties prius sunt boni, qui futuri sunt, et permansuri, mali: propter quod etiam dicuntur scribi in libro vitæ, et deleri.

‡ Et qui servo (servus) post dimissum sibi à domino omne debitum, conservo suo noluit ipse dimittere, in carcerem relegatur. Quia indulgere conservo suo noluit, quod sibi à domino indultum fuit, amisit.—*Cypr. de Orat. Domin. c. 17.*

us in hand to hold out in the strait and narrow way of praise and glory,\* &c. Yet again : "The very same spiritual grace, which in baptism is equally received by those that believe, is afterwards in our conversation and acting, either diminished or increased ; as in the gospel, the seed whereof our Saviour speaketh, is equally sown, but according to the diversity of the ground, part of it is consumed," or comes to nothing, "another part of it bringeth forth fruit in abundance, yet in a different proportion, some thirty, some sixty, some an hundred fold."† A little after : "Ofttimes it comes to pass that some of those who are" spiritually "sound, when baptized, if afterwards they fall to sin, are shaken with the unclean spirit returning unto them ; so that manifest it is, that the devil is by the faith of the believer, excluded in baptism, and that, in case this faith of his afterwards fails, he returneth."‡

Chromatius, who, according to some writers, had his time of mortality allotted unto him about the year 350, though others bring it down much lower, having upon those words, Matt. vi. 12 : "And forgive our debts, as we forgive our debtors," affirmed, that "unless we forgive our debtors, we make ourselves guilty" of eternal death "before God with our own words," subjoineth, a little after, thus : "This the Lord himself elsewhere doth most plainly make manifest, producing the example of the servant who had been a debtor, to whom, though he owed much, yet upon his entreaty, his lord forgave him the whole. This servant, after his debt had been freely remitted unto him, denying the like favour" in a smaller matter "to his fellow-servant, was cast into prison, and condemned to punishment."§

Macarius, who lived about the year 370, is a diligent and frequent assertor of the doctrine maintained in our present digression, in his writings. "After the same manner," saith he, "the Spirit admonisheth the soul, which by grace knoweth God, and is purified from her former sins, and is endowed with the ornaments of the Holy Ghost, and hath tasted the divine and heavenly meat," or nourishment ; "yet because she doth not walk in this knowledge with that diligence which is meet, nor preserveth that good affection and love which she oweth to her heavenly husband, Christ, as becometh her,

\* Solomon denique et Saul, et cæteri multi, quamdiù viis Domini ambulaverunt, datam sibi gratiam tenere potuerunt : recedente ab ipsis disciplinâ divinâ, recessit et gratia. Perseverandum nobis est in arcto et in angusto itinere laudis et gloriæ.—*Idem, Ep. 7. ad Rogat. et cæteros confess. etc.*

† Planè eadem gratia spiritualis, quæ æqualiter à credentibus in Baptismo sumitur, in conversatione atque actu nostro postmodùm vel minuitur, vel augetur : ut in evangelio dominicum semen æqualiter seminatur, sed pro varietate terræ, aliud absumitur, aliud in multiformem copiam, vel tricesimi, vel sexagesimi, vel centesimi numeri fructu exuberante cumulatur.—*Idem, Epist. 76, ad Magnum.*

‡ Et contrâ, sæpè nonnulli de illis qui sani baptizantur, si postmodùm peccare cœperint, spiritu immundo redeunte quatiuntur ; ut manifestum sit diabolus in baptismo fide credentis excludi ; si fides postmodùm defecerit, regredi.—*Ibid.*

§ Hoc autem alio in loco ipse dominus apertissimè manifestat, proferens servi illius debitoris exemplum, cui plurimum debenti rogatus Dominus debitum omne concesserat : qui cum post indultum debitum conservo suo debenti sibi nollet ipse dimittere, in carcerem traditus, et damnatus in pœnâ est.—*Chromatius in Matt. v. & vi.*

she is cast off and driven away from that life of which she did partake." Not long after: "Wherefore we must strive, and take heed with the greatest wisdom, that we work out our salvation with fear, as it is written. Whosoever therefore of you are made partakers of the Spirit of Christ, see that in nothing, neither small nor great, you behave yourselves carelessly, nor reproach the Spirit of grace, lest you be banished from that life which you have now obtained."\* Yet again, a little after: "But when the soul hath obtained grace, now is there need of much understanding and perspicacity" in discerning, "which things themselves God also gives unto the soul asking them of him, that so this soul may serve him in that Spirit which she hath received with all acceptation, and in nothing be overcome of evil, or deceived through ignorance, turning aside through rashness and sloth, and falling to do all things besides," or contrary unto "the comely" order "of the Divine will. For punishment, death, and mourning abide such a soul; which" in effect "the divine apostle himself also saith, 'Lest when I have preached unto others, I myself should be a castaway.' You see after what manner," or at how great a rate, "he feared, notwithstanding he was an apostle of God." The same father, in the same place, speaketh words to this effect: "For man is of that nature," or frame, "that though he be fallen into a deep gulf of vice, and is become the servant of sin, yet he may be converted" or turned "to that which is good; and, on the contrary, being the bond-man of the Holy Ghost, and overcome with the drunkenness of" spiritual and "heavenly things, he may be turned back to that which is evil."† No man, considering these things, can lightly imagine but that this devout and learned father, who carrieth blessedness in his name, held dogmatically, and upon mature consultation had with the best of his understanding in the mystery of Christ, a possibility that even the best and highest-raised saints may, through sloth and negligence, lose this standing, fall away, and perish.

Basil, surnamed the Great, who lived much about the same time with the last-mentioned author, assigning the differences between

\* Eodem modo etiam Spiritus admonet animam, quæ per gratiam cognoscit Deum, et purificata est à pristinis peccatis, ac ornamentis spiritûs sancti dotata, et prægustavit divinum ac cælestem cibum: ob id tamen quoddam non, sicuti decebat, diligenter in eâ notitiâ versata est, nec decenter benevolentiam ac dilectionem Christo sponso cælesti debitam conservavit, projicitur, et expellitur à vitâ, cujus erat facta particeps.—*Macar. Hom. 15.* Et paulò post: Quapropter certandum est et summâ prudentiâ nobis cavendum, ut cum timore salutem nostram operemini (operemur), sicut scriptum est. Quicumque ergo participes facti estis Spiritus Christi, in nullo pusillo, vel magno, contemptim vos geratis, neque gratiam spiritûs contumeliâ afficiatis, ne exuletis à vitâ, quam jam adepti estis, &c.

† Et paulò post: Cæterum ubi anima gratiam est adepta, tum intellectu multo atque perspicaciâ opus est, quæ etiam ipsa largitur Deus animæ ab eo postulanti, ut gratissimè illi possit inservire in eo spiritu, quem accepit, et in nullo vincatur à malitiâ, aut fallatur per ignorantiam, temeritatem, ac ignaviam aversa, peragens omnia præter decorum divinæ voluntatis. Talem enim animam manet supplicium, mors et luctus: quod Divinus etiam apostolus dixit, ne cum aliis prædicaverim, ipse reprobus efficiar. Vides cum Dei apostolus esset, quo pacto timebat. Ejus enim est homo naturæ, ut etiamsi in profundum vitiarum lapsus sit, ac peccato deserviat, ad id quod bonum est converti possit: Et contrâ, Spiritui Sancto devinctus, et rerum cælestium ebrietate correptus, ad id quod malum est converti potest.—*Ibid.*

the condition of the saints in this present world and that which is to come, asserteth this for one, That "in this life the danger of falling is great; upon which account Paul said, 'Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall:' but there," meaning, in the future state of glory, "their steps are firm," or fixed, "life is unchangeable; there is no more danger of being carried away unto sin. For neither is here any rebellion" or insurrection "of the flesh," &c. Not long after: "Therefore we men die often before the body cometh by death to be unyoked" or loosed "from the soul.—So that the life of men is made," or naturally apt "to be accomplished" or fulfilled, "not only with a change, in respect of one age succeeding another, but with falls" or ruins "of their souls through sin."\*

The same father in another place speaks yet more plainly to the business in hand. "Many," saith he, "who had gathered much together from their youth, when they come to the middle of their years, temptations from evil spirits rising up against them, and assaulting them, have not been able to bear the" stress, or "burden of the winter, for want of a good pilot-ship, and so *have lost all*. And hence it cometh to pass that *some have made shipwreck of faith*; others, by means of a violent tempest, as it were, of pleasure rushing upon them, have utterly lost that chastity which they had preserved together from their youth. A most sad spectacle! for a man after fasting, after austereness of living, after much praying, after much weeping, after a continent life, it may be for twenty or thirty years together, through negligence and carelessness of soul, to be found naked" or destitute "of all; and that such a person who hath greatly prospered" and thriven "by the" trade, or "work of the commandments" of God, "should become like unto a merchant of a great estate, who, whilst his ship sailed on her course with a fair and prosperous wind, judged himself a brave man for the abundance of goods in her, but, having passed through tempestuous seas, his vessel comes to be wrecked in the very haven, and he pointed at or shown by men as one that on the sudden, and at once, hath lost all" that abundance which he lately had. †

\* 'Ἐνταῦθα πολὺς ὁ κίνδυνος τοῦ ὀλισθήματος· διὸ καὶ Παῦλος ἔλεγεν, ὁ δοκῶν ἐστᾶναι, βλεπέτω μὴ πέσῃ· ἐκεῖ δὲ, πάγιοι αἱ βάσεις, ἀπεριτρεπτος ἡ ζωὴ· οὐκέτι κίνδυνος πρὸς ἁμαρτίαν ὑπενεχθῆναι. Οὔτε γὰρ σαρκὸς ἐπανάστασις, &c.—*Basil. in Psa.* cxiv. non longè à fine. Pauld post: Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ πρὶν θανάτῳ τὴν ψυχὴν δια-  
 ζευχθῆναι τοῦ σώματος, ἀποθνήσκομεν πολλάκις οἱ ἄνθρωποι.—Ὡστε καὶ ἡ ζωὴ τῶν ἀνθρώπων, διὰ πολλῶν θανάτων συμπληροῦσθαι πέφυκεν, οὐ μόνον ἐν τῇ κατὰ τὰς μεθελικιώσεως μεταβολῇ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς καθ' ἁμαρτίαν πτώμασι τῶν ψυχῶν.

† Πολλοὶ γὰρ πολλὰ συναθροίσαντες ἐκ νεότητος, περὶ τὰ μέσα τοῦ βίου γενόμενοι, ἐπαναστάντων αὐτοῖς πειρασμῶν ἐκ τῶν πνευμάτων τῆς πονηρίας, οὐκ ἠνεγκαν τοῦ χειμῶνος τὸ βάρος διὰ τὸ τὴν κυβερνήσιν αὐτοῖς μὴ παρῆναι· ἀλλὰ πάντων ἐκείνων τὴν ζημίαν ὑπέμειναν. Ὅθεν καὶ οἱ μὲν τὴν πίστιν ἐναυάγησαν, ἄλλοι δὲ σωφροσύνην ἦν συνήγαγον ἐκ νεότητος, ὥσπερ καταγιγῶς τινὸς τῆς πονηρᾶς ἠδονῆς ἐπιδραμοσύνης, ἀπόλεσαν. Ἐλεινόνταρον θῆμα· ἰμετὰ νησιείαν, μετὰ σκληραγωγίαν, μετὰ προσευγὴν ἐκτενῆ, μετὰ δάκρυον θαψιλῆς, μετὰ ἐγκράτειαν ἐκείνων ἐκκοσῖ πον, ἦ τριακοντα, διὰ ἀπροσεξίαν ψυχῆς καὶ ἀμέλειαν, γυμνὸν ἀπάντων ἀποδειχθῆναι· Καὶ παραπλήσιον γενέσθαι τὸν τῇ ἐργασίᾳ τῶν ἐντολῶν εὐθηνούμενον, ἐμπόρῳ τινὶ μεγαλοπλούτῳ, ὃς τῷ πλήθει τῶν ἀγωγίμων ἐπαγαλλόμενος, ἐξουρίας αὐτῷ τῆς νηὸς φερομένης, τὰ φοβερὰ πελάγη διαδραμῶν, πρὸς αὐτοῖς τοῖς λιμέσι

The same father, in another of his sermons, expresseth his sense in the matter yet before us, in words of this import: "But sin is the destroyer of that grace which is given us by the laver of regeneration." And soon after, allegorizing our Saviour's parabolical history of the man who, going from Jerusalem towards Jericho, fell among thieves, thus: "But now stripes go before stripping," or taking off his raiment, "that thou mayest learn" and know "that sin goeth before the laying aside" or loss "of that grace" or gracious benefit "which is given unto thee by that love" or kindness "which the Lord beareth unto men."\* Once more, in another homily, this great doctor of the Christian church in his days, owneth the doctrine we now contend for in words to this purpose: "Thou seest them," speaking of the Galatians, "having the Spirit; thou hast" also "heard, 'Ye are abolished from Christ,' and again, 'Ye are fallen from grace.' What doth he subjoin after all this, making room" or granting place "for their renewing? 'My little children, of whom I travail in birth again:' He had once begotten them" before; "but he that had once begotten them refuseth not to beget them the second time unto salvation."†

All the authors hitherto consulted about the sense of antiquity, and of the primitive Christians, concerning the possibility or non-possibility of the saints relapsing unto death, had served their generations respectively, and were gone off the stage of mortality, before Pelagius was entered to act his part hereon, or at least had not much to do with him. We now come to inquire what their judgment and sense in the same points were, who either synchronized with Pelagius, and skirmished him, or else took their turns of mortality after him. Concerning the former of these, that star of the first magnitude in the Christian firmament, Augustin I mean, is, I suppose, in every man's estimate, *instar omnium*, a man that will perform the service alone as sufficiently as if he had twenty more with him to assist him. Questionless, no man was better versed in the affairs of Christianity, or better understood what doctrines or opinions ruled in the Christian world, or dissented less from the common and generally received tenets of the church than he. Now to how great a degree he abounded in that faith, which believeth a possibility of the saints' declining, and that unto death, cannot lightly be unknown to those that are, though but competently, acquainted with his writings. I shall present the

διαβράγιγτος τοῦ πλοίου, πάντων ἀθρώως ἔρημος ἀπεδείχθη.—*Idem*, *Hom.* 12. in *Princip.* *Proverb. prope finem.*

\* Ἡ δὲ ἀμαρτία ἀφανιστικὴ τῆς χάριτος, τῆς δεδομένης ἡμῖν διὰ τοῦ λούτρου τῆς παλιγγενεσίας. *Et paulo post:* Νῦν μέντοι πληγαὶ τῆς ἐκδόσεως προηγούνται, ἵνα μάθῃς ὅτι ἀμαρτία προηγείται τῆς ἀποθέσεως τοῦ χαρίσματος, τοῦ δεδομένου σοι διὰ τῆς τοῦ κυρίου φιλανθρωπίας.—*Idem*, *Hom.* 21. *circa finem.*

† Εἶδες αὐτοὺς ἔχοντας τὸ πνεῦμα ἤκουσας, ὅτι κατεργήθητε ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ ὁμοίως καὶ τῆς χάριτος ἐξέπεσατε. Τὴ μετὰ ταῦτα ἐπιφέρει διδοὺς τόπον ἐγκαίνισμοῦ; *Τεκνία μου, οὐκ ἄλλιν ἄδίνω.* Ἀπαξ ἢν γεννήσας ἄλλ' οὐχ ὁ ἅπαξ γεννήσας, παραιτεῖται, καὶ ἐκ δευτέρου γεννῆσαι εἰς σωτηρίαν.—*Idem*, *Hom.* 28. *De Pœnitentia, prope finem.*

reader with a first-fruits only, and leave the harvest for his own gathering. "It is," saith he, "much to be admired, and admired again, that God, to some of his children, whom he hath regenerated in Christ, and to whom he hath given faith, hope, and love, should *not give perseverance*; when as he forgives such great sins unto strange children, and by imparting his grace unto them, makes them children of his own."\* A little after: "For of such we dispute, who want perseverance in goodness, and go out of the world by death, with the *goodness of their wills fallen from good to evil*. Let these men answer, if they can, why God did not take away such men from the dangers of life, whilst they yet *lived faithfully and religiously*, that so sin and *wickedness* might not have *changed their minds* or understandings."† That God doth not give perseverance, in such a sense as this father meaneth, viz. actual perseverance, and such which is accompanied with salvation unto some his children, whom he hath regenerated in Christ, &c. I readily and fully consent: but that he doth not give perseverance unto some, as much as he giveth unto any others of them whose deportment is but the same, I cannot believe, without believing him to be a respecter or acceptor of persons, which I must at no hand believe. Therefore, to me it is no more (scarce so much) a wonder, why God should give perseverance unto some of his children, and not unto others, than it is why he should save those that believe and not others. However, from both the testimonies cited, it is as evident as words could well make it, that the author's sense was, that truly regenerate men and believers may very possibly fall away, both totally and finally. Elsewhere he expresseth the same sense thus: "But if he that is now *regenerate* and *justified*, voluntarily relapseth into an evil course of life, surely he cannot say, I have not received it, because he hath now lost *the grace of God received* in, or by, his will being free unto evil."‡ A little after: "Nor let it trouble us, *that God doth not give this perseverance unto some of his children*: for these, whilst they live religiously, are called the sons of God: but inasmuch as they will live wickedly afterwards, and die in this wickedness, the foreknowledge of God calleth them not the sons of God."§ So again, speaking of those who, as John saith, went out

\* Mirandum est quidem, multumque mirandum, quòd filiis suis Deus quibusdam, quos regeneravit in Christo, quibus fidem, spem, dilectionem dedit, non dat perseverantiam, cum filiis alienis scelera tanta dimittat, atque impertitâ gratiâ suâ, faciat filios suos.—*Aug. de Corrupt. et Grat. c. viii.*

† Paulò post: De his enim disserimus, qui perseverantiam bonitatis non habent, sed ex bono in malum deficiente bonâ voluntate moriuntur. Respondent, si possunt, cur illos Deus, cum fideliter et piè viverunt, non tunc de vitæ hujus periculis rapuit, ne malitia mutaret intellectum illorum, etc.

‡ Si autem jam regeneratus et justificatus in malam vitam suâ voluntate relabitur, certè iste non potest dicere, non accepi, quia acceptam gratiam Dei suo in malum libero amisit arbitrio.—*Aug. de Corr. et Grat. c. vi.*

§ Nec nos moveat quòd filiis suis quibusdam Deus non dat istam perseverantiam. Nam isti, cum piè vivunt, dicuntur Filii Dei: sed quoniam victuri sunt impiè, et in eadem impietate morituri, non eos dicit Filios Dei præsentia Dei.

from them, but were not of them, "They were in a good way, but because they continued not herein, *i. e.* persevered not unto the end, they were not, saith John, of us, when they were with us; that is, they were not in the number of children, whilst *they were in the faith of children*: because they who are truly and indeed children, are foreknown and predestinated,"\* &c. From this passage it is evident, that however Augustin might seem to hold a personal election of some, somewhat after the same manner wherein it is commonly held and taught amongst us at this day, (though elsewhere he seems as much to contradict it, as we shall, God willing, show in due time,) yet he did not judge faith to be a fruit of such election, nor elect and true believers, to be voces convertibiles, but that there were many such believers, who did not appertain to the number of such elect ones, and, consequently, who might and should fall away finally. Again, not long after: "For this cause the apostle, when he had said, 'We know that all things work together for good to those that love God,' knowing that some *love God, who do not persevere* in this good, presently adds, 'to those who are called according to his purpose.'"† From these three last passages compared together, it clearly appears in what sense such other passages in this author, wherein he asserts the certain perseverance of the saints, or the children of God, which Mr. Prynne, ‡ with others, cite from him, to persuade men that he was of their judgment in the point of perseverance, are to be understood, *viz.* as importing not the perseverance, much less the certainty of the perseverance of all that are true saints or true believers, (such a sense as this would make him the greatest self-contradictionist in the world,) but only of all those whom in the said passages now cited, he calls verè filii, sons indeed, or truly sons, and so, truly saints, *i. e.* (by his own interpretation) such as are elected, or predestinated by God to be conformable to the image of his Son. And besides, that by that perseverance, whereunto this author entitles even such elect children as these, he doth not mean any such continuance of the grace or faith, once or at any time received by them, which admitteth not of a total interruption or intercision by the way, but only a residence or presence hereof in them at the time of their death, might be abundantly proved from several explications which he makes of his mind in this behalf, § if I judged it either of any great concern-

\* Erant itaque in bono, sed quia in eo non permanserunt, *i. e.* non usque in finem perseverarunt, non erant, inquit, ex nobis et quando erant nobiscum: hoc est, non erant ex numero filiorum, et quando erant in fide filiorum: quoniam qui verè filii sunt, præciti et prædestinati sunt, etc.

† Propter hoc, apostolus cum dixisset, Scimus quoniam diligentibus Deum omnia cooperantur in bonum; sciens nonnullos diligere Deum, et in eo bono usque in finem non permanere, mox addidit, His qui secundum propositum vocati sunt.

‡ Perpetuity of a Regenerate Man's Estate, pp. 243, 244.

§ Horum (electorum) fides, qua per dilectionem operatur, profectò aut omninò non deficit: aut si qui sunt quorum deficit, reparatur antequam ista vita finiatur, et deletà quæ intercurerat iniquitate, usque in finem perseverantia deputatur.—*Aug. de Cor. et Grat. c. 7. vide et de Bono Persev. c. 13, non longè ab initio.*

ment to the cause, or satisfaction unto the reader. So that his judgment clearly was, that even those who he supposed could not fall away finally, might yet fall away totally. But concerning his judgment, touching such an election of men as hath been mentioned as held by him, which was the occasion or ground of his opinion, that such could not fall away finally, or to perdition, we shall have opportunity in the latter part of this discourse to inquire, God sparing life, health, and liberty for the composure of it. In the meantime we have yet a further account of the judgment of this father touching the possibility of the total and final defection of many true believers in the citation following. "Many are called, and yet are not of those of whom it is said that few are chosen. Yet who can deny them to be elect" or chosen, "when as *they believe* and are baptized, and live according unto God? They are plainly termed elect, by those who are ignorant what they will prove afterwards, but not by him, who knoweth that they have not perseverance, which bringeth the elect to life eternal, and that they so stand that he foreknoweth they will fall. In this case, if the question be put to me, Why God doth not give perseverance unto those to whom he hath given the grace of love, by which they live Christianly, I must answer, that I am ignorant."\* If all this be not sufficient to satisfy the reader that this great and learned defender of the Christian faith, whose sense in the point in hand we are now inquiring after, was of the same judgment with us herein, let him feed further upon what yet remaineth.

Having asserted a beneficial necessity, even to the elect or predestinate ones themselves, to be kept in ignorance by God of their predestination or election in this life, he subjoins words of this import: "So then for the beneficialness of this secret, it is to be believed that some of the children of perdition, who receive not the gift of persevering unto the end, yet begin to live in such a *faith which worketh by love*, yea, and live for a time faithfully and justly, and afterwards fall away, nor are they taken away by death before this happeneth to them."† Doubtless there is no faith at all, either justifying or saving, but that which "worketh by love;" and yet we clearly see that Augustin's opinion was that the "children of perdition," *i. e.* such who perish eternally, are very capable of such a faith, and consequently may, yea, and some times do, fall away both totally and finally from it.

The same father, in another tract, discovereth his sense in the

\* Multi vocati, et non in eis, de quibus dictum est; pauci verò electi. Et tamen quis neget eos electos, cum credunt, et baptizantur, et secundum Deum vivunt? Planè dicuntur electi à nescientibus quid futuri sint, non ab illo qui eos novit non habere perseverantiam, quæ ad beatam vitam perducit electos, scitque illos ita stare, ut præsciatur esse casuros. Hic si à me quærat, cur eis Deus perseverantiam non dederit, quia eam quâ Christianè viverent, dilectionem dedit, me ignorare respondeo.—*Aug. de Corr. et Grat. c. 7 & 8.*

† Propter utilitatem ergo hujus secreti credendum est, quosdam de filiis perditionis, non accepto dono perseverandi usque in finem, in fide, quæ per dilectionem operatur, incipere vivere, et aliquandùm fideliter ac justè vivere, et postea cadere, neque de hâc vitâ priusquam hoc eis contingat, auferri.—*Ibidem, c. 3.*

point queried in these words: "That of two, both being *godly*, perseverance unto the end should be given unto the one, and *not given unto the other*, belongs to the unsearchable judgments of God."\* That in this sentence he speaks of persons truly godly, and not seemingly only, besides the exigency of the passage itself to make the sense of it regular, as well that which goeth a little before as what followeth after maketh manifest. The words a little before are these: "For of Him they receive this" power, viz. of being made the sons of God, "who giveth pious cogitations to the heart of man, by which he cometh to have faith, which worketh by love."† The words a little after, these: "To conclude, were they not both called, and *both followed him that called them?* Were they not *both* of sinners made righteous, or *justified*, and both *renewed by the laver of regeneration?*"‡ Afterwards, in the same treatise, he cites with approbation the judgment of an orthodox man, of good repute in his days, to whom also he gives the testimony of learning and much acuteness, concerning the reason which moved Christ not to work those "mighty works" among the men of Tyre and Sidon which he wrought in Capernaum, although he knew that they would have believed, and repented upon the sight of them: "The Lord Christ," saith this author, as the father records his gloss, "foresaw that the men of Tyre and Sidon would afterwards have apostatised from their faith, in case they had been brought over to believe, by such miracles wrought amongst them; in which respect it was out of mercy that he forbore the working of them there, because they had been liable to a much greater punishment, in case they should have turned their backs upon the faith which they had once received, than if they had never received it."§

In process of the same discourse, he hath words to this effect: "That of regenerate men, some die persevering unto the end; others are detained in life until they fall away, who certainly had not fallen away in case they had died before they so fell; and again, that some, who thus fall, pass not out of this life until they return," or rise again, "who certainly should have perished had they died before their return."|| The possibility of a total falling away,

\* Ex duobus autem piis, cur huic donetur perseverantia usque in finem, illi autem non donetur, inscrutabilia sunt judicia Dei.—*Aug. de Bono Persev.* c. 8.

† Ab eo quippe accipiunt eam, qui dat cordi humano cogitationes pias, per quas habeat fidem, quam operetur per dilectionem.

‡ Nonne postremò utriusque vocati fuerant, et vocantem secuti, utriusque ex impiis justificati, et per lavacrum regenerationis, utriusque renovati.

§ Quidam disputator catholicus non ignobilis hunc evangelii locum sic exposuit, ut diceret, præscisse dominum Tyrios et Sidonios à fide fuisse postea recessuros, cum factis apud se miraculis credidissent, et misericordiâ potiùs non eum illic ista fecisse: quoniam graviore pœnæ obnoxii fierent, si fidem, quam tenebant, reliquissent, quàm si eam nullo tempore tenuissent.—*Ibid.* c. 10.

|| Ipsos quoque regeneratos, alios perseverantes usque in finem, hinc abire: alios quousque decedant, hinc teneri, qui utique non decidissent, si antequam laborarentur, hinc ïssent: et rursus, quosdam lapsos, quousque redeant, non exire de hac vitâ: qui utique perirent, si antequam redirent, exirent.—*Ibid.* cap. 13.

without a final, and again, of both a total and final, cannot lightly be asserted in words more significant and express than these. The same father, in another part of his works, professeth his judgment to the same point thus: "For who dares deny but that those first men were happy" or blessed "in paradise before they sinned, although they were uncertain how long this their blessedness should continue, or whether it would be eternal? But eternal it had been had they not sinned. And now, upon good grounds, we call those blessed whom we discern to live righteously and religiously, with a hope of future immortality, without the perpetration of any such crime which wasteth the conscience, who easily obtain a merciful pardon from God for those sins of infirmity whereunto at present they are obnoxious; who, though they be certain of the reward of their perseverance, yet are found to be uncertain of their perseverance itself. For what man can certainly know that he shall persevere in the practice and proficiency of righteousness unto the end, unless by some revelation he be assured hereof by Him who, in his just and secret judgment, is not wont to inform all of such a thing, though he deceives none."\* That opinion of this father, which lieth large in these words, as in some other of the late-recited passages, and in twenty places besides of his writings, viz. that they who at present are true saints and believers, yea, and know this certainly, yet know not certainly whether they shall persevere or no unto the end, draweth along with it, by a pregnant and undeniable consequence, that opinion which all this while we avouch for his also, viz. that there is no impossibility at all but that believers may miscarry in point of perseverance, and "draw back," as the apostle speaketh, "to perdition." We shall, upon this account, at present add only one testimony more from his pen, unto which we are debtors for words to this effect, in his 107th Epistle: "Now believers pray even for themselves also, that they may persevere to be that which they have begun to be. For it is beneficial unto all, or well nigh unto all, that, for the sake of that most wholesome grace of humility, they should not be able to know how, or what manner of persons they may prove hereafter: to which point it is said, 'Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall.' For the beneficialness of this fear lest, when we begin to walk regenerately and piously, we should through security become high-minded, some who will not persevere, are, either by the permission, or provision and disposition of *God*, mixed with those who will persevere; that we, by their falling

\* *Quis enim primos illos homines in paradiso negare audeat beatos fuisse ante peccatum: quamvis de sua beatitudine, quam diuturna, vel utrum aeterna esset, incertos? Esset autem aeterna, nisi peccassent, cum hodie non imprudenter beatos vocemus, quos videmus justè ac piè cum spe futuræ immortalitatis hanc vitam ducere, sine crimine vastante conscientiam, faciliè inpetrantes peccatis hujus infirmitatis divinam misericordiam. Qui licet de sua perseverantiæ præmio certi sunt, de ipsa tamen perseverantiâ suâ reperiuntur incerti. Quis enim hominum se in actione profectuque justitiæ perseveraturum usque in finem sciat, nisi revelatione aliquâ ab illo fiat certus, qui de hæc re justo latentique judicio, non omnes instruit, sed neminem fallit.*  
—*Aug. de Civit., lib. xi. cap. 12.*

away, being terrified, may with fear and trembling hold on the way of righteousness, until from this life, which is a temptation" or trial of us "on the earth, we shall pass unto another, where pride shall not need to be repressed, nor we have occasion to wrestle against the suggestions and motions of it."\* If there be place yet left for any man to doubt or question, whether Augustin taught the perseverance of true believers at any such a rate of absolute necessity, as it hath been of late commonly taught, and received amongst us, I shall only desire such a man, in order to his thorough satisfaction in the point, to peruse what the forenamed Vossius hath written in the eleventh thesis or chapter of the sixth book of his Pelagian History; where he shall find, besides several of the testimonies now cited, several others from this father of like consideration and import: together with some explications of and observations from them; which, as far as the line of my understanding is able to stretch itself, make it a truth, parallel in evidence with the light of the noon-day, that that learned and judicious father we speak of was a thorough and professed enemy to that doctrine; I mean the doctrine of perseverance hitherto opposed in the digression in hand, All which considered, that saying of Mr. Prynne, viz., "That Augustin is so copious and full to the point," he means in asserting the doctrine of absolute and ascertained perseverance, "that he wonders how any can be so impudent, shameless, and audacious, as to cite him to the contrary;"† is, I will not say in his language an impudent, shameless and audacious saying, but such a saying, which as much ingenuity as a grain of mustard-seed would abhor. As for those quotations from this father by which he seeks to persuade the world into a conceit that he was as far out of the way of truth about the doctrine of perseverance as himself, there is not any one of them that gives any distinct sound that way. We have formerly, in this very chapter, shown you upon a clear account under the author's own hand, how those and all like passages found in his writings, are to be understood, if we desire to understand them in his sense, and with a consistency to his judgment in other places.

He that desires information whether Prosper, Salvian, Gregory the Great, Isidor Hispalensis, and other the best writers after Augustin, that had occasion to declare their judgments in the point, together with councils and synods, were not of the same judgment with Augustin, may be gratified to satisfaction, by recourse had to the oft-mentioned author, Gerard. Joh. Vossius, in his *Historia Pelagiana*, lib. vi., thes. 12. The transcribing of more passages in this

\* Jam verò ut perseverent in eo, quod esse cœperunt, etiam pro seipsis orant fideles. Utile est quippe omnibus, vel pœnè omnibus, propter humilitatem saluberrimam, ut quales futuri sint, scire non possint. Ad hoc dicitur: Qui videtur stare, videat ne cadat. Propter hujus timoris utilitatem, ne regeneratè et piè vivere incipientes, tanquam securi alta sapiamus, quidam non perseveraturi perseveraturis Dei permissione, vel provisione ac dispositione miscentur; quibus cadentibus territi, cum timore et tremore gradiamur viam justam, donec ex hâc vitâ, quæ tentatio est suprâ terram, transeamus ad aliam, ubi jam non sit elatio comprimenda, nec contrâ ejus suggestiones tentationesque luctandum.—*Aug. Epist. 107, ad Vitulem.*

† Perpetuity of a Regenerate Man's Estate, p. 242.

kind being already drawn together, and directed unto by another, and that in a book of no difficult procurement, will not, I suppose, be judged necessary, or much expedient to the business in hand, by a considerate reader.

How a doctrine of that sovereign import in Christian religion, of that pregnant assertion in the Scriptures themselves, so generally and constantly held forth and maintained by orthodox antiquity, as the doctrine of a conditional perseverance hath in all these respects been clearly proved to be, should be, especially with so much heat and confident zeal, denied and opposed by a great party of the reformers of religion in these latter days, is of somewhat a strange, but of a much more sad consideration. But as it often happeneth in sweeping of houses, especially when they are full of dust or soil, that pieces of silver or gold, and other things of value, are either through negligence, or too much haste made in the work, by those that do it, or through a badness of their sight, swept up among the soil, and cast together with it upon the dung-hill; so may it very possibly fall out in great reformations of religion, when corruptions and matters requiring reformation, whether in doctrine or manners, are very numerous, and of a long gathering, that together with the corruptions, errors, and things necessary to be removed and abandoned, some things also of worth and good import, and which appertain to the purity and soundness of religion, are renounced, and cast out likewise, partly through too much zeal of an over-hasty dispatch in the work, partly through an injudiciousness in some things, in the principal reformers; partly through that infirmity of incogitancy, which is so importune an attendant upon flesh and blood, how vigilant soever. Or as it constantly falleth out in purgings and lettings of blood, that together with the bad humours and corrupt blood, somewhat of that which is good, and serviceable for the health and strength of the body, is parted with and lost; so is it hardly to be expected but that when an attempt shall be made to purge the body of Christian religion, being now encumbered and overgrown with errors, unsound notions and opinions having insinuated into the veins, and incorporated themselves, as it were, with the pure substance of it, which was the condition of it, by falling into the hands of, and remaining so long amongst, those demoniarchical apostates, whose want of love to the truth, God avenged by sending them strong delusions which caused them to believe lies, somewhat of the soundness and native substance of it also should be divided from it, and cast into the draught together with that excrementitious and noisome matter, which is wrought out of it by the purge.

Notwithstanding, if we shall limit our discourse to the point in hand, and only speak of the doctrine of perseverance, the truth is, that a very considerable part of those who were interested in the reformation of religion about Luther's times, and who since maintain and carry on that reformation, have not departed therein from the faith of primitive antiquity, as it hath been presented in the

preceding part of this chapter: but clearly teach and assert with them a possibility of the saints' declining even unto death. Concerning those of the reformed religion commonly distinguished by the name of Lutherans, who I suppose are equal in numbers, and not inferior in parts of learning, or in zeal towards the religion which they profess, unto those who are contra-distinguished by the name of Calvinists, it is sufficiently known, that they more generally, if not universally hold and teach, with Luther himself, whose judgment in the point was briefly touched, Chap. xiv. page 477, no other perseverance of the saints or true believers, than that which possibly may miscarry both totally and finally. I shall not multiply quotations from their writings, but only lay before you some passages from Melancthon, who was Luther's companion and ally, together with two or three sayings from Chemnitius; and for the general sense of the Lutheran party of reformers, in the controversy in hand, refer you to the testimony and confession of a great defender of the common faith in the point of perseverance, who, I believe, was better acquainted with their writings, than any man that shall rise up to oppose him in his testimony.

"There are two errors," saith Melancthon, "of fanatic men, which must briefly be confuted, who conceit that men regenerate cannot lapse" or fall, "and that though they do fall, and this against the light of their conscience, yet they are righteous," or in a state of justification. "This madness is to be condemned, and both instances and sayings from the Scriptures of the prophets and apostles opposed to it. Saul and David pleased God, were righteous, had the Holy Ghost given unto them, yet afterwards fell, so that one of them perished utterly, the other returned again unto God. There are many sayings" to the same point. And having cited, upon the said account, Matt. xii. 43, 44; 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21; 1 Cor. x. 12; Apoc. ii. 5, he subjoineth, "These and the like sayings being spoken of regenerate men, testify that they may fall; and that in case they fall against their consciences, they please not God unless they be converted.)\* Elsewhere thus: "Whereas it hath been said that sins remain in the regenerate, it is necessary that a difference be made; for certain it is, that they who rush into sinful practices against conscience, do not continue in grace, nor retain faith, righteousness, or the Holy Ghost: neither can faith stand with an evil purpose of heart against conscience."† A little after: "But that they fall from

\* Sed ante explicationem partium breviter refutandi sunt duo errores fanaticorum hominum, qui fluxerunt renatos non posse labi: et quamvis labuntur contra conscientiam, tamen justos esse. Hæc amentia damnanda est, et opponenda exempla et dicta Scripturæ prophetiæ et apostolicæ, ut Saul et David placuerunt Deo, fuerunt justi, et donati Spiritu Sancto, tamen postea lapsi sunt, ita ut alter prorsus perierit, alter rursus ad Deum conversus sit. Dicta multa sunt, &c.—*Melancthon loc. de Pœnitentia.* Et paulo post: Hæc et similia dicta de renatis, testantur posse eos labi, et lapsos contra conscientiam, non placere Deo, nisi rursus convertuntur.

† Cum dictum sit, in renatis manere peccata, necesse est tradi discrimen. Nam hos qui ruunt in delicta contra conscientiam, certum est non manere in gratiâ, nec retinere fidem, justitiam, Spiritum Sanctum: nec potest stare cum malo proposito contra conscientiam fides,

grace, and shed faith and the Holy Ghost, and become guilty of the wrath of God and of eternal punishment, who commit sin against conscience, many sayings" in the Scriptures "clearly testify;" to which purpose he cites Gal. v. 19; 1 Cor. vi. 9, &c. Yet again: "Let us," saith he, "mind the examples of Saul and David, who before their fall retained those benefits" or blessings "which I rehearsed, amongst which the discovery of God, the sending of his Son, the donation of his word and gospel, the donation of the Holy Ghost, the promise of life eternal, were reckoned; and after their fall, were not only divested of these good things, but felt also the" evils or "punishments which I mentioned, whereof these were some, the wrath of God, eternal punishments, the loss of their gifts,"\* &c. No more from this author at present, (from whom, notwithstanding much more of the same import might readily be cited,) but only that short saying of his, writing upon those words of the apostle, 1 Cor. x. 12, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall,"—"But that in some who had the beginnings of faith, and afterwards falling, return not, that faith of theirs was true before it was lost" or shaken out, "the saying of Peter, 2 Pet. ii. 20, testifieth."† So that there is little or no question to be made but that Melancthon was full of enmity in his judgment against the tenet of those who affirm an impossibility of the saints' declining unto death.

Nor did Chemnitius, another learned and famous assertor of the Lutheran cause, dissent from him herein. "I answer," saith he, having mentioned a Tridentine argument against assurance of salvation, pretended from the Scriptures, "that as well the Scripture as experience teacheth that many do not persevere, but fall from grace. But this cometh not to pass from hence, or because God is not willing to preserve" or keep "those to the end whom he hath once received into his grace" or favour, "but from hence, viz. because many shed" or spill "the Holy Ghost, and shake" or dash "faith out" of their hearts "by security, diffidence, and the works of the flesh."‡ Not long after, speaking of such Scripture passages as these, "Let him that standeth take heed that he fall not;" "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling," &c. he saith, "There is a general answer to these sayings; for they are monitory unto men, lest through a persuasion of the certainty of salvation they degenerate into a

&c.—*Idem, in loc. de bonis Oper.* qu. v. Quod autem excidunt ex gratiâ, et effundant fidem et Spiritum Sanctum, et fiant rei iræ Dei et æternarum pœnarum, qui admittunt delicta contra conscientiam, id multæ sententiæ clarè testantur.—*Ibid.*

\* *Exempla cogitemus Saulis et Davidis, qui et beneficia quæ recensui (inter quæ erant, paterfactio Dei, missio Filii, donatio verbi et evangelii, donatio Spiritus Sancti, promissio vitæ æternæ, &c.,) tenuerunt ante lapsum, et post lapsum exuti tantis bonis, pœnas senserunt, quas recitavi; (inter quas erant, ira Dei, pœnæ æternæ, amissio donorum, &c.)—Idem, in loc. de Fide.*

† Quod autem in aliquibus, qui initia fidei habuerunt, et postea lapsi non redeunt, fides illa, priusquam excutitur, vera sit, dictum illud Petri testatur, 2 Pet. ii.—*Idem in 1 Cor. x.*

‡ Respondeo: multos, non perseverare sed gratiâ excidere, et Scriptura, et experientia docet. Sed hoc fit, non inde et ideò, quasi nolit Deus credentes, quos semel in gratiam recepit, ad finem usque conservare; sed ideò fit, quia multi, securitate, diffidentiâ, et operibus carnis, Spiritum Sanctum effundunt et fidem excutiunt—*Chemn. Exam. de Fid. Justif.* p. 172 b.

carnal security, whereby faith itself is choked and quite put out; and that we should not indulge any corrupt affections, because by this means faith is extinguished; and that, unless we abide in the goodness of God, we shall be cut off, Rom. xi. 22. But concerning faith, it abideth not in those who without repentance indulge vicious" or depraved "affections."\* The same author, elsewhere having recited very many texts of Scripture which speak of making shipwreck of faith, of denying the faith, of turning aside from the faith, &c., as 1 Tim. i. 19; iv. 1, and v. 8, with several others, speaketh thus: "All these sentences speak of a true, living, and justifying faith, which they teach may be shaken out, cast away, and lost two several ways, as, either by sins against conscience, (for faith doth not remain in those who give way unto and indulge evil desires against conscience, 1 Tim. i. 2, and v. 6,) or else by admitting an error in the foundation, or by overthrowing the foundation of religion, 1 Tim. iv. 6, and 2 Tim. ii. 3."†

It were easy to make the pile of testimonies from these authors yet far greater for the eviction of their sense in the question depending, but these produced are enough to satisfy ingenuity: and as for prejudice and partiality, the greatest abundance is not like to prove competent or sufficient.

That the main stream of Lutheran judgments run in the same channel with the opinions of those two great masters of this way already specified, is once and again acknowledged by Dr. Prideaux himself, (a man of opposite judgment in the present controversy,) who, as well in the doctrine of perseverance as in those other points of election, reprobation, the death of Christ, &c., coupleth the Lutherans with the remonstrants or Arminians from place to place. See upon this account his lectures *De Absoluto Decreto*, *De Gratia Universali*, *De Perseverantia Sanctorum*, &c. Therefore certainly the Protestant party of the Lutheran denomination are generally so far from magnifying the necessity or worth of that doctrine which asserteth that fatal perseverance of the saints hitherto opposed, so far from eulogizing and calling it either the fundamental article of the reformed religion, or one of the principal heads or points of doctrine wherein the Protestant or reformed churches have purged themselves from Popish errors, or the foundation of that assurance of salvation, without which that affiance which is requisite unto true faith, cannot stand, or a doctrine, which contains that promise of God in it, which all ministers are bound

\* Et paulò post: ad has sententias responsio generalis est. Monent enim, ne persuasione certitudinis de salute degeneremus in carnalem securitatem, qua ipsa fides suffocatur et extinguatur. Nec indulgeamus vitiosis affectibus: ita enim fides extinguatur. Et nisi permanserimus in bonitate Dei, excindemur, Rom. xi. Non manet autem fides in illis, qui sine penitentiâ indulgent pravis affectibus.

† Quæ sententiæ omnes loquuntur de verâ, vivâ et justificante fide, quam docent excuti, abjici, et amitti, duobus modis; vel per peccata contrâ conscientiam (fides enim non manet in illis, qui indulgent pravis cupiditatibus contrâ conscientiam: 1 Tim. i. 2, et v. 6,) vel admissio errore in fundamento, aut fundamento religionis subverso; 1 Tim. iv. 6: 2 Tim. ii. 3.—*Chemnit. Exam. part. iii. De Celibat. et Virginit. p. 33 a.*

seriously to inculcate into their people for their comfort : the Lutherans, I say, are generally so far from deifying the said doctrine with such importune and senseless acclamations unto it as these, where-with notwithstanding the superstitious ignorance and weakness of some do their devotion to it, that they rather defy and abhor it as a dangerous and pernicious error, as a pillow of Satan's making, for the flesh to repose herself securely, even in her greatest licentiousness, and unruliness, upon, as a doctrine unworthy altogether the purity, holiness, wisdom, and impartial integrity of God.

Concerning those of the reformed religion, who make one shoulder with Calvin, to lift up the same body or frame of doctrine with him, though they ordinarily, or at least frequently, I mean the greater part of them, declare themselves against the Lutheran sense in the point of perseverance, yet is this doctrine, which they so frequently oppose, either of that sovereign authority over their judgments and consciences other while, or of that signal and indispensable necessity for the managing of several points in Christian religion, that ever and anon they assert it, and are necessitated to speak things of a perfect and clear consonancy with it. I neither have leisure nor opportunity of books, to make any full collection from their writings, of such passages, which, by the number of those sayings that I have observed upon this account, within a very small compass of reading, I presume are to be found therein ; but shall give a brief account unto the reader, of what I have met with of this import, and observed, by some occasional inspections into their writings, now and then. I begin with the standard-bearer himself of this brigade, Mr. Calvin. "He commends them," saith he, speaking of the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, in respect of those to whom he writeth, "that they had begun well. But lest under a pretence of that *grace* which *they had obtained*, they should indulge a carnal security, he tells them they have need of perseverance. For many, having only tasted lightly of the gospel, do not so much as think of any proficiency, as if they were come to the highest pitch already. Thus it cometh to pass, that they do not only sit down in the midst of the race, yea, sometimes near to the very entrance of the race, but *turn* their course *quite another way*. This indeed is a very specious objection, When we have gotten Christ, what should we desire more? But if Christ be possessed by faith, we must persist in faith, that our possession in this kind may be perpetual. Therefore Christ hath given himself to be enjoyed by us, upon these terms, or by this law, that as we are admitted by faith to a participation of him, so we should by the same faith preserve and keep so great a good until death."\* The conditionality of perseverance in the saints,

\* Laudat, quod bene cœperint. Sed ne prætexta gratiæ, quam consequuti sunt, carnis indulgent securitati, dicit opus esse perseverantiã. Nam plerique delibato tantum evangelio, quasi ad summum pervenerint, de profectu non cogitant. Ita fit, ut non modò in medio stadio, adeoque propè ipsos carceres, desideant, sed aliò vertunt cursum suum. Speciosa quidem est ista objectio, Quid ultra volumus, postquam adepti sumus Christum? Verùm si fide possidetur, in

yea, the non-perseverance of some of them, cannot lightly be asserted in terms more significant and express. To tell men that they must persist in faith, to make the possession of Christ perpetual unto them: and to inform them withal, that God will by an irresistible hand of power make, or constrain them to persist in faith, is to tie plummets of lead to a man's heels to make him run the faster. The same author elsewhere: "Now," saith he, "we see who they are, whom the apostle excludes from hope of pardon, namely, *apostates, who have alienated themselves from the gospel which they once embraced, and from the grace of God, which befalleth no man, but such an one who sins against the Holy Ghost.*—Nor indeed doth *God despoil any man of his grace so*" or to such a degree "as to leave him nothing, but reprobates only. If any man asketh me, Why doth the apostle here make mention of such an apostasy, when as he speaks unto believers, who were far from so wicked a perfidiousness: I answer, He timously admonisheth them of the danger, that so they may take heed in time. Which is well worth the taking notice of, because when we turn aside out of the right way, we do not only excuse ourselves unto others, but even delude our own selves also."\* The same author, writing upon Matt. xxiv. 13, hath these words, "Although the *love* of many being surcharged with the weight of iniquities, shall *fail*, yet Christ admonisheth that this obstacle also must be overcome, lest those that are *faithful* being tired out by evil examples should *start back*, therefore he repeats that saying, that none shall be saved, but he that shall strive lawfully so as to persevere unto the end."† This author in his commentaries upon the Epistle to the Galatians is once and again led by the Spirit of truth to bid defiance to his own doctrine concerning the impossibility of the saints' final falling away. Once in these words, "He convinceth them of a defection" or falling away "not from his doctrine only, but from Christ himself. For they could not keep their hold on Christ upon any other terms, than by acknowledging, that by his benefit they were freed from the bondage of the law."‡ This testimony cannot be eluded by this accustomed put off, viz., that he speaks not of their falling away from true faith, but from the doctrine of faith, or from the profession of faith; because he saith expressly, that the apostle convinceth them of, or reproveth

ea perstandum est, ut nobis perpetua maneat possessio. Ergo hac lege se nobis fruendum dedit Christus, ut eadem, qua in ejus participationem admissi sumus fide, tantum bonum conservemus usque ad mortem.—*Calvin. in Heb. iii. 14.*

\* Nunc videmus quosnam a spe veniæ excludat, nempe apostatas qui se à Christi evangelio, quod prius amplexi erant, et à Dei gratiâ alienarunt: quod nemini contingit, nisi qui peccet in Spiritum Sanctum. —Nec certè Deus alios ita gratiâ suâ spoliât, nisi reprobos, ut illis nihil faciat residuum. Si quis roget, cur talis apostasiæ mentionem hic faciat apostolus, quòd fideles compellet qui procul aberant à tam sceleratâ perfidiâ; respondeo, maturè ab eo indicari periculum, ut sibi præcaveant. Quod notatu operæ pretium est: nam cum rectâ vitâ deflectimus, non tantùm excusamus apud alios nostra vitia, sed nobis quoque ipsis imponimus, &c.—*Calvin. in Heb. vi. 4.*

† See the author's words cited, Chap. XIII. page 424.

‡ Arguit autem eos defectionis, non à suâ doctrinâ tantùm, sed à Christo. Nam Christum tenere aliter non poterant, quàm si agnoscerent ejus beneficio nos manumissos esse à servitute legis.—*Calvin. in Gal. i. 6.*

them for, falling away from Christ himself, which is every whit as much, if not somewhat more, than falling away from true faith. Nor can it be supposed that himself, holding that the apostle charged them with falling away from Christ, should hold that they had not thus fallen away, this being no less than to charge the apostle with charging the Galatians untruly. And besides, saying that they could not, tenere Christum, *i. e.* retain or keep their hold or possession of Christ, but upon such and such terms, he plainly supposeth, that a present hold or possession of Christ may be lost. Elsewhere in the same epistle, the same doctrine goeth to wreck by the pen of the great patron, or founder rather, of it, in these words. "The meaning is, if you seek for any part or piece of righteousness in the works of the law, CHRIST becomes nothing to you, and you aliens from grace. For their opinion was not so gross, as that they thought they should be justified by the alone observation of the law, but they mingled," or joined, "Christ with the law. Otherwise Paul should have had no ground to have terrified them with such threatenings as these, What do you mean? You take a course to make CHRIST unprofitable to you, you bring his grace to nothing. Thus then we see that we cannot place, no, not the least part of our righteousness in the law, but we renounce" or bid farewell unto "*Christ and his grace.*"\* Renunciation hath no place, but in such things which were formerly either held, practised, or possessed: nor can the grace of Christ be said to be brought to nothing, in reference unto any man unto whom it was never any thing. He that never had or enjoyed the grace, favour, or good will of Christ, cannot, by any course or practice whatsoever, be said to bring it to nothing, *i. e.* wholly to deprive himself of the benefit of it. The reader's patience, I suppose, would hardly bear a particular recitation of all the passages and sayings, which with a little search might be drawn together out of the writings of this one author, who is generally looked upon as the main pillar of the common doctrine of perseverance, which yet strike at the very face of it. Yea, I verily believe, that, notwithstanding the great vote that is gotten up on the wing amongst us, of Calvin's judgment standing for the received opinion of perseverance, yea, notwithstanding his own sometimes disowning or disclaiming the contrary, yet there is every whit as much, or rather much more, to be found in his writings, of a fair and full comportance with the contrary doctrine, as with the said doctrine of perseverance. From whence I would infer, not so much the uncertainty or instability of judgment in so worthy a man, as the signal usefulness or necessity of such a principle or position in Christianity, without the help and interposure whereof, those that are enemies unto it, know

\* Sensus est, si quam justitiæ partem queritis in operibus legis, Christus nihil ad vos, et à gratiâ alienati estis. Neque enim tam crassa erat opinio, ut solâ legis observatione justificari se crederent, sed Christum miscebant cum lege. Alioqui frustrâ his minis territaret ipsos Paulus: Quid facitis? redditis vobis Christum inutilem, in nihilum redigitis ejus gratiam. Videmus ergo non posse minimam justitiæ partem constitui in lege, quin Christo et ejus gratiæ renunciatur.—*Calv. in Galat. v.*

not how to manage many their Christian occasions, or affairs otherwise. The like observation we shall have occasion to take up in reference to all the other main points held forth and argued in this treatise, in opposition to vulgar tenets, presuming themselves orthodox, because vulgar. At present, I shall add only one testimony more from Calvin, wherein he doth not only or simply assert a possibility both of the total and final falling away of true believers, but even a frequent reduction into act of such a possibility. The place is in his Commentaries upon 2 Pet. ii. "For scarce every tenth man of those who have given up their names unto Christ, retain the purity of faith unto the end. All, in a manner, degenerate" and turn aside "unto corruptions, and being deluded by masters" or teachers "of licentiousness, grow profane."\* By men giving up their names to Christ, he cannot mean, bare, formal, or loose professors, (I mean such who never were other or better than these,) because such as these cannot be charged with a non-retainment of the purity of faith unto the end, but rather with a non-receiving of the purity of faith. Therefore he must of necessity mean sound professors or true believers: and consequently affirm, that there is not one of ten among these, but degenerate into principles and practices of looseness, and turn profanelings before the end. So that what Augustin said, long since, concerning Tertullian, that being acute, or sharp-witted, "He was sometimes overcome with a sight of the truth, contrary to his opinion," may be truly said of Calvin also. His apprehensiveness was such, that now and then a sight of the truth, even contrary to the standing purport of his judgment or opinion, glanced in upon him and overcame him, subjecting his pen and conscience at once, for a season, unto her service; however, the vision ceasing, anticipated thoughts soon, it is like, recovered their former possession.

Nor was the truth, whose cause we plead, too hard only for him who was the Antesignanus, or leader on of those who have since declared themselves adversaries to her, so as to gain from him frequent and large testimonies, (as we have heard,) but hath been victorious, also, in the same kind, over those who followed him in the same unhappy undertaking against her.

Musculus is, in several places, as direct and thorough for a possibility of a total and final defection in true believers, as ever was Arminius himself. "If any man," saith he, "who hath obtained the forgiveness of his sins past, through the grace of the clemency of God, shall become so notoriously ungrateful and neglective of his own salvation, as, like unto a dog returning to his vomit, to break off the course of his repentance, and shall plainly show that he more despiseth than feareth God; he declareth himself absolutely worthy to bear" or suffer "the punishment due to those former sins, from which he hath been absolved. And to this sense speak the two places which I have lately cited from Ezekiel. Besides, if he

\* *Vix enim decimus quisque eorum, qui Christo nomen dederunt, fidei puritatem ad extremum usque retinent: omnes ferè ad corruptelas degenerant, atque à magistris licentiæ delusi, profanesunt.*—*Calvin. in 2 Pet. ii. 2.*

who through mercy hath obtained the forgiveness of a thousand talents, shall refuse to forgive his brother a hundred pence; that is, if he who hath obtained the remission of all his sins from God, shall refuse to forgive his brother, upon his request made unto him in that behalf, a trespass or offence committed against him, is there any ground or cause why we should ask why such a man should be deprived of all that remission of sins which he hath obtained, and be called to suffer the punishment which he had deserved? It being most equal, that what we desire should be done unto ourselves, we also should do unto others: or if we shall deny or refuse to do this, that we should be deprived of that favour which we deny unto others. In this case, then, it may come to pass, and justly happeneth, that grace once received should be made vain, or frustrate. But this is not to be imputed to any instability of the Divine clemency, which in God hath no place, but unto our wickedness. In which respect the apostle, not without good ground, entreats and warns us, 2 Cor. vi, that we receive not the grace of God in vain.\*

The same author, elsewhere, doth not only declare his judgment simply and positively for the doctrine asserted by us, but with a plain intimation, also, of his dissent herein from others. "Some dispute," saith he, "whether it may not so come to pass, that such a sin, which was venial, may not by circumstances become mortal, as in case drunkenness should be much frequented, and become customary, and anger by being long retained, become strengthened. My sense is, that even here also the quality of the offender ought to be considered. But if he, who was made partaker of the Divine grace, or favour, shall *fall from this grace, and of a person just, religious, faithful, and fearing God, shall become unjust, impious, unbelieving, and a contemner of God, as this man's conscience by losing the purity of faith, becomes liable unto death, so likewise all those sins of his, which whilst he was in grace were venial, are now turned into mortal. Thus we read, Ezek. xviii. when the righteous shall forsake his righteousness, and shall commit iniquities, he shall die in them. And again, all his righteousness shall not be remembered. Now what else can follow but that if a good tree be corrupted, the fruits which were good must become evil? They who from the principles or beginnings of faith, and of the good Spirit, degenerate*

\* Si quis igitur prætorum condonationem per gratiam Dei clementiæ consequutus, usque aded ingratus ac salutis suæ negligens evaserit, ut instar canis ad vomitum reversus cœptam resipiscentiam rumpat, palamque ostendat Deum se contemnere magis, quàm timere; planè dignum se esse declarat, à quo prætorum peccatorum, à quibus fuerat absolutus, pœnæ exigantur. Et huc pertinent duo loci Ezechielis, quos suprâ citavimus. Adhuc, si quis mille talentorum condonationem misericorditer adeptus, centum denarios fratri suo remittere detrectaverit; hoc est, si quis omnium peccatorum suorum remissionem à Deo consequutus, fratri in se peccanti, ac veniam postea oranti, offensam remittere noluerit, debemusne quærere, quare omni peccatorum suorum remissione, quam nactus fuerat, privetur, et ad meritas pœnas luendas revocetur? Æquissimum prorsus est, ut quod nobis ipsi contingere cupimus, faciamus ipsi et aliis: vel si id detrectemus, eâ privemur gratiâ, quam aliis negamus. Hactenus igitur fieri potest, et meritò accidit, ut semel accepta gratia reddatur irrita. Verùm non debetur hoc divinæ clementiæ instabilitati, quæ locum in Deo non habet, sed nostræ pravitati. Quare præter rationem non est quòd Apostolus, 2 Cor. vi. obsecrat et monet, ne gratiam Dei in vacuum recipiamus.—*Musc. in loc. de Remiss. Peccat. sect. 6.*

into perfidiousness or unbelief, render the whole course of their lives, which was partaker of grace, culpable of death. Such as these are they, who, with the Galatians, begin indeed in the Spirit, but end in the flesh. They are liable unto condemnation, and their sins are no longer venial; but mortal, unless they repent, and return to the grace of the blood of Christ, from which they are fallen; if yet they be fallen upon no worse terms than that, they are in a capacity of returning unto grace. Some I know are otherwise minded in this point, but I freely declare mine own judgment without any injury done to them.\* These last words, "Some I know are otherwise minded," &c. plainly show: 1. That the deliberate and resolved judgment of this author stood for the possibility of a declining in true believers, even unto death, because he asserteth it ἀντιθετικῶς, and as having weighed the contrary opinion in the balance, and found it light. 2. That in his days though there were some of a contrary judgment to him in the point, yet the greater part of Protestant divines (for of these he clearly speaketh) or at least many of them, were consenting to him. For otherwise he would not have expressed himself thus, "Scio hic a nonnullis," &c. "I know some are otherwise minded;" but rather have acknowledged his dissent herein from the generality of such men, or from the common or received opinion, or the like.

But for the clearness and thoroughness of his judgment on that side of the controversy on which we stand, several other passages in his writings speak home. "To this contristation," saith he, writing upon Rom. 14, 15, "he aptly subjoineth the destruction of those who are offended at the unadvised liberty of the strong. For their mind being weak, through such an offence as this, easily falls to this point; begins by little and little, being further weakened by a sinister suspicion, to fall away from Christianity and true faith."† Upon Gal. v. 7, he commenteth these words: "When therefore he saith that the Galatians did run well, he commendeth their zeal and studiousness in true faith, and the religion of Christ; and

\* Disputant de eo, fierine possit, ut quod veniale peccatum erat, propter quasdam circumstantias fiat mortale; ut si ebrietas frequentetur, et in consuetudinem ducatur, et ira diutius retenta corroboretur. Nos sentimus et hic quoque qualitatem delinquentis esse considerandam. Quodsi is, qui cœlestis gratiæ fuerat particeps factus, ab eâ gratiâ exciderit, et ex homine justo, pio, fidei, ac Dei timente, factus fuerit injustus, impius, infidelis, ac contemptor Dei, quemadmodum hujus conscientia puritate fidei amissâ, morti facta est obnoxia: ita et omnia illius peccata, quæ dum in gratiâ erat, venialia fuerant, in mortalia convertuntur. Sic Ezek. xviii. legitur, Quomodo recesserit justus à justitiâ suâ, feceritque iniquitates, morietur in eis. Item, omnes justitiæ ejus oblivioni tradentur. Quid autem aliud consequi poterit, si arbor bona pervertatur in malam, quàm ut et ipsi fructus è bonis fiant mali? Qui à principiis fidei ac spiritus boni ad perfidiam degenerant, omnem suam vitam, quæ venis particeps erat, mortalem constituunt: quales illi sunt, qui cum Galatis, spiritu quidem incipiunt, tandem verò carne desinunt. Illi condemnationi sunt obnoxii, et eorum peccata non amplius venialia sunt, sed mortalia, nisi resipiscant, et ad gratiam sanguinis Christi, unde prolapsi sunt, revertantur: si tamen ita prolapsi sunt, ut resipiscentiæ, ac redeundi ad gratiam locus esse possit. Scio hic à nonnullis aliter sentiri: verùm quid mihi videatur, absque illorum injuriâ liberè dico.—*Musc. loc. de Peccat. s. 5.*

† Commodè subjicit huic contristationi perditionem eorum, qui temerariâ fortium libertate offenduntur. Animus enim ad hunc modum contristatus, tanquam infirmus, facillè eò labitur, ut incipiat sensim per sinistram suspitionem labefactus deficere à Christianismo, et verâ fide.—*Musc. in Rom. xiv. 15.*

withal signifieth that they might have attained the mark of true felicity and salvation had they persevered in that which they had well begun.\* Upon chap. i. 6, of the same epistle, his pen was ordered by him into words of like import, as viz. these: "He had planted the Galatians and watered them diligently, by the preaching of the gospel of God, hoping that it would have so come to pass that they would have increased in the knowledge and grace of Christ. But whilst he thus hopeth and wisheth, they are transplanted or removed from him, in whom they had been planted."† Once more upon Mat. xviii. 35, he observeth: "That those sins, which are through the grace of God pardoned at present, shall not be remitted or pardoned unless we shall forgive our brother. For it is an unjust thing that he should enjoy the remittment or forgiveness of a debt of ten thousand talents, who refuseth to forgive his brother a debt of an hundred pence."‡ So that Musculus is no man for absolute perseverance.

Nor doth P. Martyr seem to be a man of any such engagement, by what he writeth upon 1 Cor. xiii. 2. "They who truly believe," saith he, "when they fall into heinous sins, and nevertheless believe the same things which they believed before, cannot be said to be without faith, when as notwithstanding they are despoiled of love" or charity. "But we do not grant or admit that such men have faith whilst they live in their sins. For of such the apostle witnesseth, that they profess to know God, but in works deny him. Therefore these men may be said to retain rather a show or shadow of faith than true faith indeed, of which we speak."§

B. Aretius, in his commentary upon 2 Pet. ii. 20, plainly enough discovereth himself to be of the same judgment, where, by those who through the acknowledgment of Jesus Christ had truly escaped the pollutions of the world, &c. he understandeth persons that had been once converted.|| As also upon 1 Cor. viii. 2, where he supposeth a weak brother in the faith liable to perishing.

Nor can he that shall impartially consider what Bullinger writeth upon 1 Peter i. 5, conceive him to have been otherwise judgmented in the case. "In the meantime," saith he, "let this suffice us, that eternal happiness is in safety for us, which neither men nor devils

\* Cum itaque Galatas benè cucurrisset dicit, laudat illorum zelum ac studium in verâ fide ac religione Christi: significatque potuisse eos ad veræ felicitatis ac salutis metam pertingere, si in eo, quod benè cœperant, perseverassent.—*Musc. in Gal. v. 7.*

† Plantaverat Galatas et rigaverat diligenter per evangelii Dei prædicationem: sperabatque fore, ut crescerent in cognitione et gratiâ Christi. Dum hoc sperat, et optat, illi, ab eo, in quo plantati fuerant, transponuntur, &c.—*Musc. in Galat. i. 6.*

‡ Tertia observatio est, etiam ea delicta, quæ jam condonata sunt per gratiam Dei, non fore remissa, si nos nolimus remittere fratri. Est enim injustum gaudere de remissis sibi talentis mille, qui nolit centum denarios fratri remittere.—*Musc. in Matt. xviii. 35.*

§ Qui verè credunt, cum labuntur in gravia peccata, et nihilominus eadem credunt quæ pridè, absque fide dici non poterunt, quòd tamen charitate sint expoliati. Cæterùm non admittimus, dum in suis peccatis versantur eos fidem habere. Illis apostolus testimonium defert, quòd fateantur se nòsse Deum, sed illum factis negent. Idèd illi simulachrum potiùs et spectrum fidei, non autem veram fidem, de quâ agimus, retinere dicuntur.—*P. Mart. in 1 Cor. xiii. 2.*

|| Ostendit autem se loqui de conversis semel, qui mox doctorum malorum operâ relabuntur in prius vitæ genus etiam sub Christianismo.—*Vide Mat. xii. et ad Heb. vi.*

can intercept," or deprive us of, "*unless faith fail us*, wherewith we should depend wholly upon heaven, with the neglect of things minded by mortal men."\* He that supposeth or affirmeth a man to be out of all danger or possibility of perishing, but only in case of a failing of his faith, necessarily supposeth: 1, That such a man is at present invested with such a faith, which is of the saving kind; and 2, that there is a possibility that this faith may fail him before his end. To make an exception to a rule of an impossibility is to sacrifice either to laughter or folly.

Piscator himself likewise entertained this truth at unawares, when in his scholia upon Rom. xiv. 15, he maketh the apostle to say, that a "believer, for whom Christ died, may, through an offence taken, forsake the profession of the gospel, and so perish out of," or without, "the faith of Christ."† For what is this, being interpreted, but to affirm that true believers, even such for whom Christ died, may fall away so as to perish?

Nor doth the gloss of Mr. J. Deodat, as his Englisher presenteth it, upon 1 Cor. viii. 11, look any other way. "*Perish, i. e.*" saith he, "shall be in danger of wounding his conscience mortally; and whereas before through tenderness of conscience he abhorred any thing that drew near to idolatry, he may peradventure use himself to it, to the shipwreck of his salvation." He that is dead, is in no danger of being wounded mortally; but he, who being alive, is in this danger, is in a possibility at least of suffering accordingly. Nor can any person be said to make shipwreck of that of which he never was possessed, nor yet to be in danger hereof.

Nor, doubtless, was learned Junius otherwise minded, when he delivered himself in these words, "If there were no possibility that a righteous man or believer might fall away, neither would the apostle have made this hypothesis, or supposition, nor would he have inferred so grave" or weighty "a saying upon the supposition; nor would he have applied this saying to the Hebrews, to whom he wrote in the cause which was now in hand."‡

These passages also from the same author, are no slender evidences of the propension of his judgment the same way. "Nothing at all shall be wanting to us on the Lord's part, if we be not wanting unto ourselves."§ And again, "Christ requires only one condition from us, viz. That we abide in him, and be circumspect, and attent to keep ourselves from all sin and unbelief, even as he pro-

\* Nobis interim sit satis, quod æterna felicitas nobis est in tuto, quam nullus hominum aut dæmonum possit intercipere, modò ne nos deficiat fides, quæ, neglectis rebus mortalium, toti pendeamus à cælo.

† Perdito] id est, offedito, ut evangelii professionem deserat, atque ita extrà Christi fidem pereat. Metonymia effecti. Pro quo mortuus est:] Quippe qui mortuus est pro omnibus credentibus.

‡ Si non posset fieri ut justus, vel credens aliquis deficeret, neque hypothesin hanc facturus esset apostolus, neque ex hypothesi tam grave pronunciatum allaturus, neque ad hanc causam quæ agitur, hoc dictum Hebræis, quibus scribebat, accommodaturus.—Junius in Parallel. ad Heb. vi. 4—6.

§ A Domino nihil planè defuturum est, modò ne nobis deficiamus ipsi.—Idem in Parallel. ad Heb. iii. 6.

miseth that he will abide in us.\* In the former of these sayings, he clearly suspends the perseverance of the saints, and the continued collation of the grace of God, which is absolutely necessary hereunto, upon the care and faithful endeavours of men for the obtaining of it. In the latter, with like clearness, he makes their perseverance conditional, and requires circumspection and watchfulness in the saints, in order to their abiding in Christ, notwithstanding his promise of abiding in them; hereby plainly declaring, that he understands this promise of Christ in a sense conditional, and not absolute.

Mollerus, upon Psalm li. 12, commenteth that "David lost the Holy Ghost by his sin, and was deprived of his gifts. So that, he departing from or not governing David, his heart became polluted with wickedness of all sorts. Therefore, he prays that a clean heart might be again created in him, which the apostle, Acts xv., calls a heart purified by faith, viz. from sin and the guilt thereof, that so he might have right thoughts of God, might truly acknowledge God, without hypocrisy or simulation, but might come unto him, call upon him, believe on him, fear, obey him,"† &c. This text needs no commentary.

I might here add the testimony and consent, both of former councils and synods, as likewise of the confessions of many late Reformed churches. But because others have prevented me in both, as viz. the forementioned Gerard. Joh. Vossius in the former,‡ and P. Bertius in the latter, § I choose rather to desire the reader desirous of satisfaction in either, to consult these authors respectively, than to imbulk our present discourse with transcriptions, which are of so ready an inspection elsewhere.

Only for a taste, I shall here present the reader with a few lines out of the confession of the Reformed churches of Saxony, wherein they professedly give the right hand of fellowship to us in the doctrine held forth in our present digression. "When it is said," saith this confession, "that sins remain in the regenerate, it is necessary that a difference be made. For from that saying, Luke ii., 'He goes and takes unto him seven other spirits worse than himself, and they entering in dwell there,' &c., and such like sayings, it is manifest, that some *regenerate persons* grieve and shake, or dash, the Holy Spirit out of them, *are again cast off by God, and become guilty of the wrath of God, and of eternal punishment.* And Ezek. xviii. it is written, 'When a righteous man shall forsake his righteousness, and shall commit iniquity, he shall die therein. And when

\* Christus postulat à nobis unicam conditionem, nempe ut maneamus in ipso, et circumspectiam, attendamusque nobis ab omni peccato et infidelitate, quemadmodum ipse in nobis sponte se mansurum esse.—*Ibid.* ad ver. 12.

† David amiserat Spiritum Sanctum per peccatum, et privatus erat donis. Itaque ipso discedente aut non regente Davidem, cor statim pollutum est omnis generis sceleribus. Ideò petit rursùm in se creari cor mundum, id quod apostolus dicit Act. xv., purificatum fide, à peccatis scilicet et reatu, ut rectè sentiat de Deo, verè agnoscat Deum, sine hypocrisis aut simulatione, sed accedat ad eum, invocet eum, credat in eum, timeat eum, obediat ei, &c.

‡ Hist. Pelag. l. vi. Thesi 12.

§ Hymenæus Desertor. p. 105, &c.

the unrighteous shall forsake his unrighteousness, and do righteousness, he shall live therein.' Therefore, there is a necessity of putting a difference between such sins which remain in holy men during this mortal life, but do not expel or drive the Holy Ghost out of them, from such other sins from which a man becomes *again liable to the wrath of God*, and to eternal punishment. And Paul, Rom. v., distinguisheth between sin reigning and not reigning. And elsewhere he saith, 'If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but, if by the Spirit ye shall mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live.'"\* With much more to the same point and purpose.

From the premises, exhibited in this chapter, these five things are concludable above all contradiction. First, That the doctrine of absolute and unconditioned perseverance, as it is commonly taught and believed amongst professors at this day, and as it is stated and maintained in the writings of many Reformed divines, over honoured, many of them, with the style of orthodox, was not known or heard of by the name of orthodox, in the primitive and purer times of Christian religion; nor owned or taught by any of the learned fathers or writers for several centuries of years after Christ. Secondly, That neither since the reformation of religion by Luther and his compeers hath it found entertainment with the generality, at least, of that numerous party of Protestants which, for distinction's sake, are termed Lutherans, or with the learned amongst them, but that these, very few, if any, excepted, generally teach and believe, with the primitive Christians and fathers, that persons truly regenerate and believing may possibly fall from their present standing, and that so as never to rise again. Thirdly, That this doctrine (I mean, the possibility of such a declining in true believers, which ends in death and condemnation,) is by some, who otherwise are generally looked upon as followers of Calvin, yea, and are, not undeservedly, numbered amongst the most judicious and learned of this party, pregnantly, and with particularity of profession and acknowledgment, avouched. Fourthly, That Calvin himself, who is supposed to be the first founder or father of the said common doctrine of perseverance, or, however, is the grand patron and protector of it, together with the generality of his learned followers, are constrained, ever and anon, in their writings, to give testimony unto and to assert the contrary, whether it be by the forcible evidence of the truth prevailing at times over them, or whether it be out of a necessity that ever and anon recurred upon

\* Quam dictum sit in renatis manere peccata, necesse est tradi discrimen. Nam ex dicto Lucæ xi. Vadit et assumit septem alios spiritus nequiores se, et ingressi habitant ibi, &c. et similibus dictis manifestum est, aliquos renatos contristare et excutere Spiritum Sanctum, rursus abjici a Deo, ac fieri reos iræ Dei, et æternarum pœnarum. Et Ezek. xviii. scriptum est; Quam recesserit justus a justitia suâ, et fecerit iniquitatem, morietur in eâ; et cum recesserit impius ab impietate suâ, et fecerit justitiam, vivet in eâ. Necesse est igitur discerni peccata, quæ in sanctis in hac mortali vitâ manent, nec excutiant Spiritum Sanctum, ab aliis peccatis, propter quæ homo rursus fit reus iræ Dei, et æternarum pœnarum. Et Paulus, Rom. v. discernit peccatum regnans, et non regnans. Et alibi inquit, Si secundum carnem vixeritis, moriemini; si actiones carnis spiritu mortificabitis, vivetis, &c.—Vide quæ sequuntur in *Confess. Saxon. Art. x. De Discrim. Peccatorum.*

them, to use the principle of the contrary doctrine, for the due managing and carrying on other subjects and discourses. Fifthly, and lastly, That the doctrine of falling away, maintained in the digression yet in hand, hath been held, maintained, and professed, not only by particular persons, both ancient and modern, of greatest name and note for true worth in every kind, as for sanctity, learning, largeness of parts, soundness of judgment, &c., but by councils, synods, and whole Protestant churches, also, in their confessions. All which considered, we shall need no other demonstration of the importune unreasonableness and vanity of those ecstasical and wild encomiums, or exorbitant depredications of the doctrine of inevitable and unfrustrable perseverance, which are found in the writings and heard from the mouths of some of the overzealous admirers of it, as if, for example, it were the fundamental article of the Reformed religion; one of the principal points of Christian religion, wherein the Protestant churches are purged from popish errors, and which hath always been maintained by the Reformed churches against Papists; the foundation of all true certainty of salvation, without which that fiducial and firm assurance which is requisite in and unto true believing cannot stand; such a doctrine, which all true ministers of the gospel ought to inculcate into and whet upon all true believers for their comfort, with other like swelling words of vanity. Doubtless, if it be an error, and confederate against the holiness and truth of the gospel, (a crime which hath been by many competent and sufficient witnesses proved against it,) it is so far from meriting any of those impotent acclamations lately specified, that it really deserves to have its portion with those merchants and money-changers whom our Saviour with a scourge drave out of the temple, John ii. 15, as profaners of the holy design and counsel of God therein.

But, because the learning and authority of the late Synod of Dort is laid hold on by many, as shield and buckler to defend the said doctrine, I shall, for a close of this chapter, and of the whole digression, briefly account unto the reader for such particulars as I judge worthy his cognizance and observation, in and about what this Synod attempted, in order to the defence, maintenance, and safety of the said doctrine. Far be it from me to subscribe the report or information of those who charge the respective members of this Synod with suffering themselves to be bound with an oath, at or before their admission hereunto, to vote down the Remonstrants and their doctrines howsoever; yet, when I read and consider, 1. How learnedly, solidly, and substantially they quit themselves and argue, whilst they go along with the Remonstrants, and declare wherein they agree with them, in the points controverted between them; 2. How feebly and unlike themselves they reason when they come to the quick of the difference; 3, and lastly, How near, at very many turns, even in those things wherein they pretend to differ, they come unto them, as if they had a very good mind to be no more two, but one with them; when, I say, I consider all these things, methinks I see the interest and obligation of an oath

working much after the same manner\* as sometimes it did in Herod, when, "for his oath's sake," contrary to his mind and desire otherwise, he caused John the Baptist's head to be given unto Herodias in a platter, Matt. xiv. 9. To show how pregnant, or, if you will, how masculine they are, in avouching their judgments, whilst they keep company with their adversaries, is, I conceive, needless, as well themselves (I mean such of them as are yet living) as their friends being persuasible enough hereof, without argument or proof. To show how far they fall beneath themselves, when they come to contest and plead the points in difference, would be, in effect, and in reference to the business in hand, but to re-do that which is done already; in which respect neither is this necessary; I shall, therefore, with as much brevity as the reader can well desire, and in a regular prosecution of the design of the chapter in hand, only show how near they came, in sense and substance of matter, to their adversaries, in the present question concerning perseverance; and

\* Bishop Hall, who had been a member of the Synod of Dort, was living when Goodwin's "Redemption Redeemed" was published; and this passage, concerning the oath which was taken by the members of the Synod, being shown to him, he addressed a letter to Mr. George Kendall, one of Goodwin's opponents, and another to the historian Fuller, in which he denies that any such oath as that which is here described was taken by himself and his synodical brethren. On the publication of the bishop's letter by Kendall, Mr. Goodwin published the following answer:—

"Let us do a deed of charity, and relieve the undeserving, being in want, with an alms of credit, in accepting Mr. Kendall's affidavit touching the author of the letter here produced by him in behalf of the Synod; yea, and let Bishop Hall's testimony be as valid in his own case as it reasonably might have been in another man's; yet all this sunshine and soft rain will not make the crown of innocency and of honour to flourish upon the head of the Synod. For,

"1. The letter itself acknowledgeth an oath to have been 'tendered unto,' and taken by, 'every one of the divines present, both native and foreign.'

"2. Concerning the tenor and import of this oath, the said letter acknowledgeth this to have been one clause of it; viz. that 'every one of those divines would judge and determine of those points controverted, only out of, and according to, the written word of God.' Such an oath as this, without a very favourable construction, and qualifying proviso or explication, is no ways honourable to those that shall submit unto it: for doth not he that shall swear thus to do, according to the plain and direct sense of the words of the oath, swear to do that which only such a person is capable of promising, upon any terms of certainty, to perform, who is acted, yea, and knows that he is acted, yea, and that he shall be acted when himself pleaseth, with a spirit of infallibility? For who can say, or promise, (and withal give sufficient security for performance,) that he will judge and determine of points controverted (especially of the deepest and most profound points in controversy,) 'only out of and according to the written word of God,' but only they who know themselves to be infallibly inspired, yea, and that they shall be infallibly inspired, with the true sense and mind of God in his word; yea, and that they shall be prevailed with and assisted by the grace of God to act according to the dictates and dueture of this spirit of infallibility when they come to 'judge' or 'determine' of such points? Or is it a thing meet in itself, or any ways agreeable to the principles of Bishop Hall and his confederates in the Synod, that men shall swear, or take an oath, that God shall assist them with a spirit of infallibility, or shall not fail to assist or bless them with the discovery of the truth, when and in what cases themselves please? Or was there not every whit as much as this plainly contained in that oath, wherein it is confessed that the Dort Synodians did swear, 'that they would judge and determine of the points controverted only out of, and according to, the word of God?' And whether they have discharged or violated this oath in 'judging' and 'determining' the said 'points' as they have done, the day when every man's work shall be manifest will determine. Yet,

"3. In case, when they submitted to the taking of the oath now under question, some such question as this had been put to them, Whether they did not judge that their present sense and judgment, touching the points controverted or to be controverted in the Synod, was 'according to the word of God' or no, and so whether their intent and meaning in their oath was not, to 'judge and determine the points in controversy' according unto these; what may we reasonably

leave it to Christian consideration, whether the difference between the two combating parties was of that latitude or weight that the one should deserve the beautiful crown of orthodoxism and honour for their dissent from their adversaries; and the other, the punishment, shame, and reproach of persons so deeply and desperately erroneous, for their non-agreement with theirs.

This Synod of Dort expressly granteth, that not only they who are under a possibility of falling away, both totally and finally, but who, de facto, will thus fall away, (for their non-electi signify such men as these,) may be supernaturally enlightened, by virtue whereof they may understand that those things which are reported or laid down, in the word of God, are true, and do give an *unfeigned assent* unto them.\* And again; That "such as these are enlightened with the supernatural knowledge of the truth of the gospel; which enlightening proceeding from the Holy Ghost, begets true knowledge in their minds, from whence, as oft as is needful, they may act or work conformably to it."† And yet further; That "the seed which fell upon the stony ground signifies, or points out, such hearers, who for a time believe, *i. e.* who assent unto the things revealed by God, and more especially to the covenant of the gospel. And that their assent in this kind was no ways counterfeit or feigned appears from hence, that they received the word with joy."‡ By the express tenor of this discourse, most evident

conceive their answer would have been? Doubtless they would not have denied but that they judged their present judgment touching the 'points in controversy' to be 'according to the word of God, therefore, when they swore or took oath to judge and determine these points according to the word of God,' did they not, in effect, swear that they would 'judge and determine' them according to their own present sense and judgment? Now, their sense and judgment touching the said 'points,' at the time of their taking the oath, being opposite to the doctrine of the Remonstrants, did they not, constructively, take oath 'to vote down the doctrine of the Remonstrants?'

"4. That the Synod was resolved beforehand to 'vote down,' or give sentence against, the Remonstrant cause, (and, doubtless, this resolution was concurrent with the oath which was now upon them,) appears by the first of those reasons or motives which they delivered in writing unto Nicolaus Grevinchovius and Simon Goulartius, for their removal out of the Synod, after they had admitted them to sit there. The tenor of their reason was, 'Because it was declared by their letters of credence, that they were sent to defend the cause of the Remonstrants; whom they must renounce, if they meant to sit as judges in their place.' And, however, upon the invalidity and emptiness of this, with the other two reasons insisted upon by the Synod, for the removal of the said two persons from amongst them, clearly demonstrated by the Remonstrant party, the said persons were permitted to keep their places; yet would not this be, nor was, granted unto them but under certain conditions, which were not only unjust in themselves, and contrary to the nature of a free Synod, but such also which were not exacted or required of any of the rest of their members. And what can be the interpretation of this test, but that Mr. Kendall's clients (the venerable Synod) were extremely jealous beforehand lest they should meet with the least disturbance or opposition in their resolutions of voting down the Contra-Remonstrant cause; that is, being interpreted, the truth?"—*Goodwin's Triumviri*, pp. 222—224. Edit. 1658.

\* *Quibusdam non-electis conceditur quædam illuminatio supernaturalis, cujus virtute intelligant ea, quæ in verbo Dei annunciantur, esse vera, iisdemque assensum præbent minime simulatum.*—*Act. Synod. Dordrect.*, part. ii. p. 188.

† *Hi omnes illuminati sunt cognitione supernaturali veritatis evangelii: quæ illuminatio à Spiritu Sancto profecta, veram notitiam in horum mentibus genuit, ex quâ actus eliciebant, quoties opus erant, eidem conformes.*—*Ibid.*

‡ *Semen quod cecidit super petrosam, eos denotat auditores, qui ad tempus credunt, i. e. qui divinitus revelatis assentiuntur, et imprimis pacto evangelico. Assensum autem hunc minime simulatum fuisse inde constat, quod sermonem cum gaudio exciperunt.*—*Ibid.* p. 189.

it is, that this Synod granteth a possibility of falling away, both totally and finally, in those, at least in many of them, who by means of a supernatural illumination, and this wrought by the Holy Ghost, come truly and unfeignedly to believe the gospel, yea, and to live and to walk conformably unto it. So then if it be made to appear by clear evidence of Scripture that such as these, viz. who truly and unfeignedly believe the gospel, live conformably to it, &c., are true and sound believers, in an estate of justification, acceptation with God, &c., it undeniably follows, that this Synod, which with the weight of their sentence ground to powder their brethren termed Remonstrants, for their opinions, as being of most dangerous and desperate consequence, (especially this, concerning the possibility of a non-perseverance in true believers,) were in the very same condemnation themselves, held and asserted the same errors, if yet errors they were, with them. I speak now only concerning their dogmatizing with them in the point of perseverance, the fifth and last head of the controversies between them. But the truth is, and an intelligent reader may readily find it, that in other points also, wherein they sentenced the persons mentioned as men so extremely and dangerously erroneous, as in the question about the extent of Christ's death, the extent of saving grace, &c., they deliver and maintain the same things with the persons sentenced by them, if not formally in plainness and expressness of terms, though sometimes they want very little even of this, yet arguively, in grounds and principles manifestly bearing and issuing forth the same conclusions, as we shall have occasion to show, God willing, in the progress of our present discourse.

Or though it could not be proved from the Scriptures that the persons subjected to a possibility of a total and final apostasy, by the Synod, are true and real believers, yet if they were, or be, such in the sense and judgment of the Remonstrants, which is apparent enough that they were and are, the Synod had no cause to fall foul upon them, as erroneously dissenting from them in the point of perseverance, but only as dissenters, or erroneous, in judging or discerning the difference between sound and unsound believers, or between persons justified and not justified. But this only by the way.

But that the persons liabled by the Synod to a defection from faith, both total and final, as, viz. such who, being supernaturally enlightened, have the true knowledge of God, unfeignedly believe the gospel, act conformably, have their affections in part changed, their lives in part reformed, their persons in part renewed,\* &c., are by the Scriptures adjudged for true and sound believers, for persons truly justified, &c., is so apparent, that to me there seems no place left for doubting, unless, haply, prejudice or anticipation of judgment makes room for any man in this kind. Yea, the

\* In iisdem ex hac cognitione et fide oritur affectuum quædam mutatio, et morum aliqualis emendatio.— Et ver. 6, innuitur eosdem aliquo modo fuisse renovatos, &c.—*Ibid.*

Scripture makes not only the collection, or joint concurrence of the particulars specified, a distinguishing character of true and sound believers from those who are not such, but some of them even singly and apart from others. As, 1. A true and unfeigned belief of, or assent unto, the things revealed by God in the gospel. "But these things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name," John xx. 31. First, there is nothing more evident than that the word of God doth report and declare, that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." 2. It is here plainly asserted, that to believe this, at least with a true and unfeigned faith or belief, is available unto "life," or salvation. Otherwise we must say that that faith, for the effecting and working whereof in the hearts of men the gospel was written, is unavailable to save them. Which to affirm, what is it but to bring an evil and hard report upon the gracious counsel and intendment of God in causing the gospel to be written? But the same truth is most manifestly asserted in very many places besides. "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" 1 John v. 5. To "overcome the world" is an unquestionable character of a person justified, and in favour with God. And "whosoever," saith John, "believeth that Jesus is the Son of God," partakes in this glory, is victorious "over the world." So again, the Lord Christ, having a little before his ascension commissioned his apostles thus, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature," he immediately subjoineth, "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned," Mark xvi. 15, 16. That "believing" which our Saviour here requires, and unto which he promiseth salvation, is doubtless no other faith, or believing, but a true and unfeigned belief of that gospel of his which his apostles, in the words immediately preceding, were enjoined to "preach unto the world." And if it shall be said, that men might, or may "believe," and that truly and unfeignedly, all that the apostles preach to them, and yet perish; that vast and signal difference which our Saviour here makes between "believing" and "not believing" vanisheth into nothing, is made none at all. See further upon the same account, John viii. 24, and xi. 27; Acts viii. 37, 38; Rom. iv. 3, and x. 9; with very many other texts of like pregnant and unquestionable import. From all which it fully appeareth, that a true and unfeigned admission or reception of the gospel, as it cometh from God, and is declared by him in the writings of the prophets, evangelists, and apostles, into the heart and soul of a man, (which is done by a true and unfeigned belief of, or consent unto it,) translates him from death to life, makes him a child of light, a son of God, an heir of salvation, &c. And what faith or belief, can it reasonably be imagined, should have this mighty and blessed influence upon the creature man, to turn him from darkness unto light, from death unto life, from Satan unto God, but only the true and

unfeigned belief of those glorious mysteries which were brought out of the breast and bosom of God by his Son Jesus Christ, at his coming into the world?

That a true, cordial, unfeigned belief of the gospel, and things of God, is true justifying faith, hath been the sense and doctrine of the best and most judicious authors, as well ancient as modern, I could instance and prove at large, if it were not somewhat too eccentrical to the business in hand. "It is," saith Calvin, "the righteousness," *i. e.* the justification, "of faith, if we believe that Christ died, and was raised up again from the dead."\* Elsewhere he saith, that the apostle Paul "defines those to be faithful," or true believers, "who have the *knowledge* of sound doctrine;"† and pronounceth the faith of Sarah, whom he calls "the mother of all believers," to consist in this, "That she judged God faithful, or true, and that in his promises."‡ Luther, speaking of Abraham, saith that "he was justified only upon this, that he gave credence to the word of God;" interpreting that of Moses, Gen. xv. 6, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness;" as if he had said, "Abraham believed God to be true in his words and promises, and was therefore counted a worthy and righteous man by God."§ And learned Chamier defines Abraham's faith, whereby he was justified, "*Ingentem confidentiam super promissione divinâ, quam ille credidit omnino implendam;*"|| *i. e.* a mighty confidence of the promise of God, which he believed would absolutely be fulfilled. Peter Martyr most frequently, and I think I might say constantly, in his writings, placeth justifying faith in a firm belief or assent unto the gospel or word of God. "Our faith," saith he, "is nothing else but *an assent or firm persuasion of the words of God.* From whence it appears that our faith proceeds from the faith" or faithfulness "of God. For when our experience teacheth us that he is faithful, we readily believe him; and that belief which we give to his words, is presently attended with hope."¶ By which last words it is evident, that he speaks of true justifying faith in the former. Again: "Faith may be defined to be a firm and constant assent of the mind to the words of God, inspired by the Holy Ghost for the salvation of those that believe. In this definition

\* *Fidei justitia est, si credamus Christum esse mortuum, atque à mortuis excitatum.—Calvin. in Gal. iii. 12.*

† *Posteriori membro definit quos vocet fideles, nempe qui notitiam habent sanæ doctrinæ.—Idem, in 1 ad Tim. iv. 3.*

‡ *Hanc enim fuisse Saræ fidem prædicat, quòd veracem judicavit Deum, iòque in suis promissionibus.—Ib. in Heb. xi. 11.*

§ *Abrahami exemplum adducit, quippe quod ille ex hoc tantum justificatus fuerit, quòd verbo Dei fidem habuerit, quemadmodum Scriptura inquit, Creditit Abraham Deo, et imputatum est ei ad justitiam, Gen. xv. Ac si diceret, Abraham Deum in suis verbis et promissionibus veracem credit, et idcirco à Deo pro spectato et justo viro habitus fuerit.—Luth. Posthil. p. 782.*

|| Chamier. tom. iii. page 428.

¶ *Nostra fides non aliud est quam assensus, et persuasio firma de verbis Dei. Unde liquet fidem nostram ex Dei fide nasci. Quia cum illum fidelem esse experiamur, facillè credimus, et fidem, quam verbis ejus adhibemus, illicò spes consequitur.—P. Mart. in 1 Cor. i. 9.*

there is none of the four causes wanting: the word of God is the matter," or material cause; "*the act of consenting, the formal; the Holy Ghost, the efficient; our salvation, the final.*"\* In which words it is observable, that he expressly makes the formal cause of justifying faith to consist in the act of assenting or consenting (to the word of God). Yet again: "To believe, as to our purpose, is by means of the inspiration of the Holy Ghost to exhibit," or give, "*a firm assent* unto the word of God, and this for the authority of God himself." And not long after: "Let us now infer that faith is a gift or faculty, inspired into us by the Spirit of God, whereby we yield *a firm and settled assent* unto the word of the Lord by means of his authority."† Once more: "In this dispute," of justifying faith, "by faith we understand, that *firm assent*, which is of so great strength and efficacy, that it draweth along with it the effect of affiance, hope, and charity, together with all good works, as the infirmity of this present life will bear."‡ From the latter words of this testimony it plainly appears, that the sense of this author is, that that trust, recumbency, or reliance upon God or Christ, wherein the said Synod, with some others, placeth, as it seems, the essence of justifying faith, is no part of this faith, but only a necessary effect or consequent of that firm assent unto the gospel or word of God, wherein he placeth the entire essence of this faith, as we have heard. Of which unquestionable truth I could join many co-assertors unto him, of approved learning and worth, as Chamier, Dr. George Downham, and others, if I conceived it any ways necessary or commodious to the business in hand.

But I have still a considerable reserve of resolute doctors to make good against the Synod of Dort, that they themselves assert and teach a possibility of a final apostasy in persons truly justified, as well as their opposers, the Remonstrants, notwithstanding their heavy censure passed upon them for this doctrine, such I mean who place true justifying faith in a certain knowledge of, or firm assent unto the word of God; and consequently conclude those to be persons truly justified, against some of which the said Synod doth not only vouch and teach a possibility of their total and final defection, but even a necessity also; which is a strain of contest against the necessity of the saints' perseverance, higher than ever any Arminian or Remonstrant wound up his pen unto. "We therefore," saith Gualter, "say, that faith is a certain firm assent of mind

\* Fides definiri potest, quod sit firmus ac constans animi assensus verbis Dei, Spiritu sancto afflatus, ad salutem credentium. Nullum causarum genus in hac finitione desideratur. Materia, est verbum Dei. Forma, consentiendi actio. Efficiens, Spiritus Dei, quo suademur. Finis, est nostra salus.—*Ibid. in ver. 31.*

† Quamobrem credere, prout ad rem nostram facit, est afflatu Spiritus Sancti verbo divino assensum firmum præbere, idque ipsius Dei autoritate.—*Idem, in 1 Cor. xiii. 2.* Paulo post: Jam colligamus, fidem esse donum sive facultatem, nobis Divino Spiritu afflatam, quâ verbo Domini, ejus autoritate firmum constantemque præbemus assensum.

‡ Omnibus igitur significationibus his abjectis, in hac disceptatione fidem intelligimus, firmum illium assensum, qui tantarum sit virium ac efficaciarum, ut secum trahat effectum fiduciarum, spei, charitatis, et omnia tandem bona opera, ut præsentis vitæ infirmitas patitur.—*Idem, in loc. Com. Class. 3, c. 4. sect. 5.*

arising from the word of God, whereby we acknowledge Christ for such as the Scriptures exhibit him unto us"\* (or hold him forth to be). "That faith," saith Melancthon, "which justifieth, is not only a notice of the history, but it is to *assent* to the promise of God, wherein remission of sins and justification are freely offered for Christ's sake."† And elsewhere he affirms this faith to be "*an assent* to every word of God delivered to us."‡ Chemnitius delivers this definition of justifying faith as more generally approved of by Protestant divines, and by himself also: "Faith is to *assent* unto the whole word of God delivered unto us, and herein to the free promise of reconciliation granted" unto us "for Christ" our "mediator."§ Musculus observeth, that "In the example of Abraham in the Scriptures, this is not only commended," or taken knowledge of, "that he believed there was only one God, but that he believed the promises of God;"|| clearly implying, that his belief of these promises was that faith which justified him. Zanchius reports this to be a definition of justifying faith, which Bucer and other orthodox divines gave: "Faith is the gift of God, and work of the Holy Ghost in the mind of the elect, whereby they *believe the gospel* of Christ."¶ Himself elsewhere frameth us this definition: "Faith is a virtue given unto us by God, by which we *are persuaded*, that whatsoever was heretofore propounded by the prophets and apostles in the name of God, and is now preached unto us out of their writings, is the word of God, and believe and profess this whole word, as well the law as the gospel, as the certain word of God."\*\* Beza affirmeth, that "The state of the epistle to the Romans is to be ordered," or disposed of in our judgments, "thus: That we are saved by God through one Christ, *if we shall believe the gospel*."†† Polanus describes justifying faith "*A knowledge and assent*, whereby a man believeth all that to be true which God hath commanded to be believed."‡‡ Ursine thus: "Faith is a true persuasion, whereby we *assent* to every word of God delivered unto

\* Dicimus ergo fidem esse, certum et firmum animi assensum, ex verbo Dei enatum, quo Christum talem agnoscimus, qualem illum nobis Scripturæ proponunt.—*Gualt. in John. Hom.*

† Sed illa fides, quæ justificat, non est tantum notitia historię, sed est adsentiri promissioni Dei, in quâ grâs propter Christum offertur remissio peccatorum et justificatio.—*Melanct. in loc. de Justificat.*

‡ Fides est assensus omni verbo Dei nobis tradito.

§ Fides est assentiri universo Dei verbo nobis tradito, et in hoc promissioni gratuitæ reconciliationis donatæ propter Christum mediatorem.—*Chemn. Exam. p. 159.*

|| In exemplo Abraham, non hoc tantum prædicatur, quod crediderit ille hoc tantum, unum esse Deum, sed quod fidem habuerit promissionibus Dei.—*Musc. loc. de Justif. sect. 5.*

¶ Non Bucerus solum, sed etiam alii multi definiunt sæpè fidem ita, ut dicant eam esse donum Dei, et opus Spiritus Sancti in mente electorum, quo Christi evangelio credunt.—*Zanch. tom. vii. p. 352.*

\*\* Fides est virtus à Deo nobis donata, quâ quicquid olim propositum fuit nomine Dei, à prophetis et apostolis, nunc autem nobis ex ipsorum Scriptis prædicatur, persuasi sumus esse verbum Dei, illudque totum, tam legem, quam evangelium, ut certum Dei verbum credimus ac profite-mur.—*Zanch. tom. iv. p. 241.*

†† Sic disponendus est status hujus epistolæ; nos à Deo per unum Christum servari, si evangelium crediderimus.—*Beza in Rom. i. 17.*

‡‡ Fides est notitia et assensus, quo creditur verum esse, quicquid Deus credendum præcepit.—*Polan. Partit. Theolog. l. ii. p. 368.*

us.\* “If thou,” saith Mr. Tyndal, the martyr, “believest the promises of God, the truth of God justifieth thee, *i. e.* he forgiveth thee thy sins, and taketh thee into favour.”†

Give me leave to instance one author more. Dr. J. Davenant, a member of those convened in the Synod at Dort, et quorum pars magna fuit, arguing against Bellarmine, the non-abolition' of faith, even in the glorified condition itself of the saints, in respect of the nature, habit, or essence of it, useth this demonstration: *viz.*, that “those who are in an estate of perfect blessedness are so” affected or “disposed that they are willing to assent unto God, not only because of the evidence of the matter, but also for the authority of the asserter, although the thing affirmed were in itself inevident.” Yea, and further saith, that “there is none of the blessed” or glorified “ones but will much more readily believe God for the authority of the speaker, than he that is endued with the greatest faith amongst travellers,” (*i. e.* amongst the saints that are yet in the course of their pilgrimage upon the earth.‡) Therefore, questionless, his sense also was, at least when he wrote these things, that a true, firm, and unfeigned assent unto God, speaking, asserting, or revealing, is true faith and justifying; for about this was the contest between him and his adversary. And besides, the whole tenor of the discourse there managed makes this manifest.

Fearing lest I have overcharged the reader's patience already, I supersede the citation of the ancient fathers, besides others more of our later Protestant authors, who generally look upon it as no injury to truth to hold and teach that a true, real, and unfeigned assent unto the gospel and promises of salvation herein, is nothing less than a true justifying and saving faith, a faith instating a person in the grace and favour of God. So that, 1, by the express testimony of the Scriptures themselves; 2, by the conviction of sound reason; and lastly, by a verdict of the most judicious and learned of their own friends, at least claimed and owned for such by themselves, the Synod of Dort, who levied a hard and most severe sentence against the possibility of the saints' perishing by apostasy, have stumbled at that stone of inexcusableness of which the apostle speaks, Rom. ii. 1: “Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art, that judgest; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest dost the same things.” Yea, it hath been proved that this Synod itself flew

\* Fides est vera persuasio, quâ assentimur omni verbo Dei nobis tradito.—*Ursin. de Primo Præcept.*

† Si promissionibus Dei credas, veritas Dei te justificat, *i. e.* ignoscit tibi, teque in gratiam recipit.—*Tyndal. de Christian. Obed. ad Hen. 8.*

‡ Dicimus igitur fidem, quoad habitum manere, et perfici in futurâ vitâ, licet evacuetur quoad accidentalem aliquam conditionem pro statu viæ illam concomitantem. Ipsi enim beati sic dispositi sunt, quod non solum Deo assentire velint ex evidentia rei, sed etiam propter auctoritatem asserentis, quamvis res affirmata esset in se inevidens. Imò multò promptius propter auctoritatem dicentis crederet Deo quivis ex numero beatorum, quam ille qui maximâ fide præditus est inter viatores. Hoc autem arguit habitum fidei esse in beatis perfectissimum, quamvis obscuritas ejus ratione statûs gloriosi evacuetur.—*Dr. J. Daven. Prælect. de duob. in Theolog. contr. capitibus, &c. p. 326.*

a higher pitch of opposition against the perseverance of the saints than those who upon this account were made such grand offenders by them.

This indictment we have hitherto managed and made good against them by the consideration of one character or expression only from their own pen, whereby they describe those, whom they expose to a possibility of apostatising to perdition, viz., a true and unfeigned belief of or consent unto the evangelical compact, and whatsoever is revealed by God in the gospel. This we have proved by a cloud of witnesses, some speaking from heaven, others from the earth, to be an inseparable and essentially distinguishing character of true saints and justified men. But,

2. If we judged, or could think that the reader would judge, that which hath been done already insufficient to evince the Synod, though not of error or heresy, yet of autocatacrisy or self-condemnation, we should insist upon and urge other expressions from them, whereby it may be made yet further to appear that their foot is in very deed in that snare we speak of. For do they not say and confess in words plain enough, which have been cited, that the persons put by them under a possibility, yea, some of them (horrendum dictu) *under a necessity* of that doomful apostasy which is always accompanied with eternal perdition, may have, and that many of them *de facto* have, the true knowledge (of God and of Christ, or of God in Christ) in their mind, for what other knowledge they should here mean is not imaginable, and that out of this knowledge they may as oft as is needful (is not this constantly and without turning aside?) act conformably? And what is this but to bring forth fruits worthy repentance, yea, and to equalise the best and worthiest of the saints in doing righteousness, which the Holy Ghost makes the most emphatical and unerring property or character of such men. "Little children, let no man deceive you," saith John, "he that doeth righteousness is righteous even as he is righteous," 1 John iii. 7; of which passage formerly, Chap. ix. p. 232, and Chap. xi. p. 358. And again, "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil. Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God," 1 John iii. 10; and consequently whosoever doth righteousness is of God. For otherwise the not doing of righteousness were no manifestation of the one sort of these children from the other.

3, and lastly, Whereas the Synod pleads, that the seed falling upon the stony ground, Luke viii. 13, imports such hearers which for a time believe, *i. e.* give an unfeigned assent unto the things revealed by God in the gospel,\* and afterwards fall away, whereby they would insinuate that these hearers, notwithstanding their unfeigned assent unto the things of God and the gospel, were never true saints, nor persons justified before God; we have formerly by an impartial inquiry into the parable, and by many pregnant arguments drawn from the carriage of it, evinced that the persons emparabled by the seed falling upon the stony ground were true saints

\* Acta. Synod. Dordrec. part. 2, p. 189.

and their faith of the same kind, and, during the continuance of it, equally justifying with theirs, who were represented by the good ground, Chap. xii. p. 390, 391.

Leaving therefore the Synod at present, let us recollect, and draw up into a brief account the sum of all that hath been argued in the present digression, and so conclude this chapter.

First, It hath been clearly proved, that the doctrine which maintains an absolute necessity, or infallibility of the saints' perseverance in grace or faith unto the end, hath nothing more in it (or rather nothing so much) for the true and real consolation of the saints than that which is contrary unto it. Secondly, Diligent and impartial search hath been made into those passages of Scripture which the greatest advocates of the said doctrine of perseverance mainly insist upon for the defence of it; none of which, it hath been made fully to appear, holdeth any true or real correspondency with it. Thirdly, The best and most substantial arguments and grounds upon which the said doctrine is wont, by the skilfulest workmen of her party, to be built, have been weighed in the balance, and found too light. Fourthly, The doctrine contrary hereunto and which avoucheth the possibility of the saints' declining, and this unto death, hath been asserted by the express testimony and consent of many Scriptures. Fifthly, This doctrine also hath received further credit and confirmation from several principles and grounds, as well of reason as religion, and these pregnant and strong. Sixthly, The truth of this latter doctrine hath been further ascertained by several instances and examples of persons, who by their fallings have caused the said doctrine to stand impregnable. Seventhly, This doctrine hath been countenanced, also, by the concurrent sense of all orthodox and Christianly-learned antiquity. Eighthly, It hath likewise received testimony from the generality of that learning and religion, since the times of reformation, which have commended themselves unto the world in the works and writings of that party of men in the Protestant churches, which is commonly known by the name of Lutheran. Ninthly, Substantial proof hath been made, that the professed adversaries of the doctrine we now speak of, even the most steady, grave, and best advised of them, have at unawares given large and clear testimony unto it, being not able, without the help of the spirit which speaketh in it, to manage, like themselves, their discursive affairs in other cases. Yea, tenthly, and lastly, That the Synod of Dort itself, convening with a conscientious, if not with a concupiscentious prejudice also (for this is the strong suspicion of many) against it, with its fellows, and intending and provoking one another to lay the honour of it in the dust for ever, hath, at several turns and in divers expressions, according to the interpretation and sense of their own most orthodox and learned friends, yea and some of themselves, fully comported with it, asserting that, in clearness and evidence of principle, which they deny with solemnity of protest, and with a religious abhorrency in conclusion.

We now return to the further prosecution of the business principally intended in this discourse, (from which we have made somewhat a large digression, upon the occasion formerly specified,) and to complete our demonstration of this great and most important truth, viz. That the ever blessed Son of God, and Saviour of the world, the Lord Jesus Christ, gave himself a ransom in his death, for all and every man, without exception of any.

## CHAPTER XVI.

*Several other Texts of Scripture (besides those formerly produced in ranks and companies) argued to the clear eviction of truth, in the same doctrine, viz. That the redemption purchased by Christ in his death, was intended for all and every man, without exception of any.*

HAVING in our late digression largely vindicated some material proofs from the Scripture, formerly levied for the defence of that great and most important cause, both of God and men, the universality of redemption by Christ, we now proceed to a further levy upon the same account, and shall raise up more Scriptures to plead the same cause.

Let us begin with the parable of the marriage feast, as it is reported by Matthew and Luke. We shall not need, I suppose, to transcribe the whole protasis of the parable, which is very large: but only insist upon some few known passages of it, such as I conceive will jointly, if not severally, give a light of demonstration to the truth of that doctrine, the proof and confirmation whereof is the prize contended for in this discourse. However, if the reader desires an entire inter-view of the parable, he may repair, without much trouble, to the evangelists themselves, Matt. xxii. 2, &c.; Luke xiv. 16, &c.

First, Expositors generally agree, that by those who were the first and second time called or invited to the wedding, "He sent forth his servants to call them that had been called\* to the wedding," Matt. xxii. 3, are typified, or meant, the Jews, whom God had anciently invited and called, by the ministry of his prophets, and several other ways, to partake of that great blessedness, which he intended to confer upon the sons and daughters of men, by means of his only begotten Son Jesus Christ, and who were the second, yea, and the third time also, invited hereunto; first by John the Baptist and the Lord Christ himself, and afterwards by his apostles.

Secondly, The tenor or form of the invitation, which the servants sent forth to call those that had been formerly invited, were enjoined by the king to use in calling them, is this: "Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed,

\* Καλέσαι τοὺς κεκλημένους.

and all things are ready : come unto the marriage," Matt. xxii. 4. When he saith to those that are invited, "I have prepared my dinner, my oxen," &c. doubtless his meaning is not that he had prepared his dinner for others, or that his oxen and fatlings were killed for the entertainment of others, and not for those who were invited by him. Such an intendment as this in his invitation had been merely delusory, and altogether unmeet to represent the intentions of God, in calling men to communion and fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ, by his ministers of the gospel. He that should invite a man to a feast, and use such an argument or motive as this, to persuade him to accept of this his invitation, and to come accordingly, viz. that he had made very liberal preparations for such and such other men, but had provided nothing for him, should he not render himself ridiculous by such a strain of oratory ?

Thirdly, Evident it is, that very many of those who were invited to this marriage feast by the king, and consequently for whom the feast was prepared, and for whose sake the oxen and fatlings were killed, never came to partake of the said feast, but were ejected and excluded from it with great indignation, by him that had so graciously invited them. "But when the king heard thereof," (viz. how they had misused and murdered his servants,) "he was wroth, and sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burnt up their city," ver. 7. Concerning whom, likewise, the king said to his servants, that had been sent forth to invite them : "I say unto you, that none of those men that were bidden" (and refused to come) "shall taste of my supper," Luke xiv. 24.

Fourthly, It is no less evident, that the true ground or reason why those that were thus excluded from the feast, or suffered this exclusion, was not any precedent purpose or intendment in the king to exclude them, (for had any such intention harboured in him, questionless he would never have invited them,) no nor yet that subsequent intendment in him to exclude them, when he saw their great unworthiness ; but this unworthiness of theirs itself. "Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready ; but they which were bidden were *not worthy*. Go ye, therefore, into the highways," &c. Matt. xxii. 8. Clearly implying, that it was the *unworthiness* of the persons invited, which was the true and proper cause of their exclusion. Neither the import nor sentence of the law, nor yet the judge, or his just severity in giving sentence according to the law, are so properly the cause of the punishment or death of the malefactor, as the crime committed against the law by himself. It is merely accidental to the law and to the judge, and so to their intentions respectively, that such or such a person becomes a malefactor, and, consequently, that he suffers death. But the suffering punishment, or death, are the natural and proper fruits of the violation of the law, justly inflicting them in whomsoever it be found. And if the matters of fact deserve punishment or death, it would argue a defect in the law and in the judge, if they should not, according to their different capacities, give sentence accordingly. We have, as

I remember, elsewhere shown, that neither God, nor any decree or law of his, are any cause, intentionally or directly, of any man's either sin or punishment, but occasionally or accidentally only; and that so, that whosoever sinneth, or comes to be punished for sin, might have avoided both, any purpose, law, or decree of God notwithstanding. And to this purpose pertinent is the observation made by Musculus, upon our Saviour's expression, Matt. xxii. 2. *ὁμοιώθη ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν, &c. i. e.* The kingdom of heaven is made like, or become like," (not is like,) "unto a certain king," &c. "For," saith he, "the kingdom of heaven is not such a thing, that all the particulars here," in this parable, "reported of it, should belong to the nature of it: but several of them are accidental to it, through the wickedness of men. Otherwise, this kingdom doth not of itself, or in its proper nature, tend to the destruction of any man,"\* &c.

Fifthly and lastly, The pregnant result of the premised particulars is this, that the marriage feast in the parable was provided by the king, and the oxen and fatlings, here spoken of, killed not only for those who upon their invitation were persuaded to come and partake of them, but as well, and with equal, if not with more especial, intentions on the king's part, for those also who never came to taste of them; and consequently, that the death of Christ, signified by the oxen and fatlings slain, and the blessedness accruing unto the children of men hereby, signified by the feast itself, were equally meant and intended by God for those who perish and for those who are saved, and consequently for all men, without exception of any. And indeed this purport of the parable lieth so large and full in the carriage of it, that Calvin himself could not but subscribe unto it, as he that shall please to peruse his commentaries upon Matt. xxii. 2, and withal acknowledge what is evident, must needs confess. Amongst several other passages facing this way, having specified some points of difference between Matthew and Luke in recording the parable, he saith, that yet "in the sum and substance of the matter they very well agree, viz. that whereas God vouchsafed this peculiar honour to the Jews, to provide and furnish a table of entertainment for them, they rejected this honour proffered to them." And saith moreover, that "whereas many expositors refer the marriage of the king's son" in the parable "to this point, that Christ is the end of the law, and that God had no other intent in his covenant with this people than to set him" as a king or ruler "over them, and by the sacred band of a spiritual marriage to join a church unto him, I freely accord with them herein."† After-

\* Observandum est quàm notanter sit dictum, ὁμοιώθη, simile factum est. Non enim in seipso tale quid est regnum cœlorum, ut quæ hic de illo commemorantur, ad illius pertineant naturam, sed accidunt illi improbitate mortalium. Alioquin non facit naturâ suâ ad eujusdam perditionem, etc. Proinde rectè non dicit: simile est regnum cœlorum, ὁμοία ἐστὶ, sed simile factum est, ὁμοιώθη.

† In summâ quidem optimè conveniunt, quòd cum Deus Judæos peculiari honore dignatus

wards, upon verse 9 of the same chapter, "But," saith he, "if God then spared not the natural branches, the same vengeance hangeth over us at this day, unless we answer when he calleth. Yet shall not the supper *provided*" or prepared "*for us* be lost, but God will furnish himself with other guests."\* In these passages, this great supposed enemy to the universality of redemption by Christ, clearly supposeth, or affirmeth rather, the same to be a truth; for he expressly affirmeth that God provided a table of entertainment for those who rejected it and never came unto it, and supposeth that the "supper provided" by God "for us," may, through our neglect of our invitation hereunto, be withheld from us, and that others may be admitted unto it in our stead. If the death of Christ, and salvation by him, were provided and prepared by God as well for those who reject them as for those who embrace them, doubtless they were intended for all men without exception: which truth, as was lately observed, is so necessary for the due managing of the Scriptures, and many other the most important affairs in Christian religion, that the professed enemies thereof are ever and anon constrained and forced to make use of it, both in opening the Scriptures, as likewise in their other theological discussions and debates, and so consequently to give testimony unto it. And the very truth is, that it is one of the main pillars that supports and bears up the weighty fabric of that divinity and religion which the Scriptures hold forth unto the world.

Another piece of Scripture rising up in assertion of the same doctrine is that which speaks in these words: Ἐπεφάνη γὰρ ἡ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ ἡ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, &c., *i. e.*, word for word, "For there hath appeared the grace of God, which is saving unto all men," or, "being saving unto all men," Tit. ii. 11; that is, which is of a saving nature, property, or tendency, unto all men. The Syriac translation reads, "Servatrix omnium," the saviouress of all men. Our last English translators, rendering the place thus, "For the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men," show themselves more indulgent to their own sense and opinion than will well stand with the ingenuousness and faithfulness required in translators, an infirmity too apparent in them at several other turns; though the truth is, that this translation of the words damnifies their opinion one way as much or more than it gratifies it in another: for in making the apostle to say that the "saving grace of God hath appeared unto all men," they suppose him to be of their judgment, who conceive the gospel and the saving grace thereof to be discovered and preached

fuerit, quasi mensam hospitalem illis instruens, illi oblatum sibi honorem contempserint. Quoddam nuptias filii regii hinc referunt multi interpretes, quia Christus finis est legis, neque aliud spectavit Deus in suo fœdere, quàm ut eum populo suo præficeret, sacroque spiritualis conjugii vinculo ecclesiam ei conjungeret, libenter amplector.

\* Quoddam si tunc non peperit naturalibus ramis, eadem nobis hodiè impendit ultio, nisi vocanti respondeamus. Nec vero peribit cœna, quæ nobis perata erat, sed alios sibi convivas Deus accerset.—*Calvin. Harm.* p. 188.

by God unto men, not only by the ministry of men, or by the letter of the gospel itself, but by the works of creation also, and the gracious government of the world. For certain it is, that the "saving grace" of God, of which the apostle here speaks, had not at this time "appeared unto all men" upon any other terms. But this by the way. Our former translators dealt much more fairly with the Holy Ghost at this place, rendering and pointing the words thus: "For that grace of God, that bringeth salvation unto all men, hath appeared." The "grace of God," in Christ, is here said to be *σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις*, salvifical unto all men, not because it is such to all sorts or ranks of men only, or to some men of all sorts and degrees, (as some, not fearing to destroy the clear sense of the Holy Ghost to salve their own, interpret,) but because it is such to "all men" simply and without exception of any. This exposition is confirmed,

1. From the context, in the words immediately following, wherein the proper end or ducture of this "saving grace of God," now discovered, is declared thus: "Teaching us that denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godlily in this present world." If, then, this "saving grace of God teacheth," *i. e.* be apt to teach, persuade, and lead "all men" without exception, as well one as another, to a denial of "all ungodliness," . . . and to "live soberly," . . . then must it needs be alike saving unto all. For if this teaching property in it flows from the savingness of it, which the apostle here clearly supposeth, then must the savingness of it necessarily be of equal extent with that property. An act of grace, love, or bounty, inviteth, obligeth no more unto thankfulness than those to whom it is meant and intended. Now, certain it is, that the saving grace of God, held forth and proffered unto all men in the gospel, teacheth, inviteth, persuadeth, obligeth all men without exception, as well one as another, to deny ungodliness, &c., to live soberly, &c: otherwise we must say that there are some men who ought not, who are no ways bound, to learn any of these things from the gospel, nor to practise them upon any account of grace or love tendered herein from God unto them: which, I suppose, is a saying too hard for any considering man to digest.

2. The words themselves in their grammatical, native, and proper signification, give out the sense and exposition specified. The "grace of God" here spoken of is expressly said to be *σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις*, *i. e.* "saving," or salvifical "unto," or apt to save, "all men." And of what dangerous consequence it is to turn the words of the Holy Ghost out of their proper and best known significations into any by, devious, and qualified sense, when there is no necessity of doing it, hath been once and again admonished and declared in the premises.\*

3. The exposition given fairly accordeth the passage in hand

\* Chap. V., p. 152; Chap. VI., p. 160, 161.

with many other its fellow-Scriptures, as where God is said to have "prepared his salvation (*τὸ σωτήριον αὐτοῦ*) before the face of *all* people," Luke ii. 30; to be "willing to have *all* men saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth," 1 Tim. ii. 4: so again, "to have *none* perish, but to have *all* men come to repentance," 2 Pet. iii. 9; and again, where Christ is said, "through the grace of God," to have "tasted death for *every* man," Heb. ii. 9: to omit several others, which we have demonstratively proved to be of one mind and one heart with the said passage, so understood, as now interpreted.

4, and lastly, The exposition given is attested by orthodox interpreters, so owned and acknowledged by our adversaries. "By name," saith Pelican, "he testifieth (the grace of God) to be *common to the universe of men*," or to men universally, "because of servants, of whom he had spoken." And presently after: "But we are *all* one in Christ, we are *all* universally called to the kingdom of God, we were *all*, after the offence given, to be reconciled unto our Father."\* Aretius, upon the place, affirmeth that "the gospel offers the grace of God unto *all* men;" and hereupon infers, that "therefore it concerns *all* men to adorn the doctrine hereof with their lives and manners."† If "the gospel offers the saving grace of God unto all men," and "all men" upon this account stand bound "to adorn the doctrine thereof," then must this grace, in the offer of it, and so in the intention of him who offers it in the gospel, be saving, *i. e.* of a saving tendency and import unto "all men." Yea, if "all men" stand alike bound, in respect of the alike offer of it respectively unto them, (neither of which likeness can reasonably be denied, or indeed questioned,) it is a plain case that the savingness of it, and salvation by it, is by God alike intended unto all men. But from the universal offer of grace unto men in the gospel, we have formerly argued and evicted real intentions in God of salvation by Christ unto "all men," without exception.‡

As for those trivial evasions from this and such like Scriptures, as, *viz.* that by "all men," may be meant either great numbers of men, or all sorts, or some of all sorts and ranks of men, or Jews and Gentiles; and so again, that the grace of God may be said to be "saving unto all men," because there is a sufficiency of merit in Christ to save all men, though the salvation of all men by him be not intended by God, &c. These, I say, with the like put-offs, we have already, upon like occasions frequently occurring, detected of vanity, and showed their clear inconsistency with the principles, as well of that "wisdom which is revealed from heaven" in the Scrip-

\* *Nominatim universis communem esse (gratiam Dei) testatur, propter servos, de quibus locutus erat—sed cuncti in Christo unum sumus, universi ad regnum Dei vocamur, omnes post offensam Patri nostro reconciliandi fuimus.*

† *Prima ratio est, evangelium omnibus hominibus offert gratiam Dei; ergo omnium interest hanc doctrinam ornare vitâ et moribus.*

‡ Chap. VII., p. 177, &c.

tures, as of that reason and understanding which are naturally ingrafted in men. If any man's judgment be yet tempted with a face of any seeming beauty or strength in any of them, he may, I presume, be delivered from further inconvenience in this kind by a second review of the sixth chapter of this discourse, at least if he shall diligently consider what is to be seen there.

In the next chapter of the same epistle, the apostle addeth light unto light in the business in hand, expressing himself thus: "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards men appeared," &c. 2 Tit. iii. 4, 'Ἡ χρηστότης, καὶ ἡ φιλανθρωπία' the goodness and the love of God towards man. I here demand, How or whether God can, in any tolerable construction of reason or common sense, be said to be *φιλάνθρωπος*, a lover of men, or to bear an affection of love to men, in case he should hate incomparably the far greatest part of men, and that with the hatred of a reprobation from eternity, leaving them without all possibility of escaping eternal misery and torment, and this, when as at the same cost and charge which he hath been at for the saving of a few, he might have provided for the salvation of them all. For this they affirm who grant that Christ died sufficiently for all, but intentionally only for a few. Can we say that a king or prince is a lover of his kingdom or of his subjects, only because he loves two or three favourites about his court, especially when the generality and great body of his subjects are in imminent danger of perishing, or being undone, unless he provides for their relief, and he in the midst of the greatest abundance of means to relieve them, and this without the least prejudice or hinderance to himself, shall altogether neglect them in their danger and misery? Doubtless there was never prince or king, since the world began, that ever obtained the name or honour of "a lover of his subjects" upon such terms as these. And yet they make God a "lover of men" in no other sense, upon no whit better terms, who affirm and teach that he loved only that small number of men which they call "his elect," (which the Scripture very frequently affirms to be "few," in comparison of those who perish,) when as that great generality, and vast body of men, were, from the greatest to the least of them, in most imminent danger of being undone, and that in the most dreadful manner that can be imagined, to the days of eternity; teaching withal, that the death of Christ, which was bestowed upon these few only, was sufficient for the saving of the rest also; and that God, upon mere will and pleasure, not to ease his Son Jesus Christ in the least, nor to accommodate himself at all otherwise, implacably resolved from eternity to exclude all these from part and fellowship in that salvation. With a great desire my soul desireth, that men whose consciences serve them to oppose in the present controversy, would seriously and calmly consider, whether that *φιλανθρωπία*, that love to mankind, which the Scripture reporteth to be in God, be at all compossible or consistent with such a dismal design in reference unto men as that now represented.

Again, if God loveth only such a small number of men as the opinion which we oppose supposeth, why is not *φιλαγγελία*, the love of angels, as well as *φιλανθρωπία*, the love of men, ascribed unto him? For doubtless if God loves no more men than those who come to be actually saved, he might more properly and truly be said to be *φιλάγγελος*, a lover of angels, rather than a lover of men. Because if we shall restrain his love towards men only to those comparative few who will be actually and eventually saved, he will be found to love a far greater proportion of angels than of men; it being no ways probable but that the number of angels who keep their standing and are elect is far greater, being compared with those that fell, than the number of men who, according to the Scriptures, are like to be actually saved, is, being compared with those that perish.

To say that God's love, though but to a few men, expressed in the gift of his Son Jesus Christ to die for them, is more considerable and so a more reasonable ground of giving the denomination of *φιάνθρωπος* unto him than the love which he bears to angels, though more in number or in proportion, is to say that which no way easeth the matter, or solveth the difficulty. First, because the angels, the elect angels, as the Scripture calleth them, are partakers with men in the gift of Jesus Christ given unto men, though not in that redemption from sin and misery which accrues unto men by him, unless haply it be by sympathy with their fellow-creatures in their joy and blessedness, yet otherwise, as appears from Col. ii. 10, and other places; and besides is generally acknowledged by divines. Secondly, one of the highest expressions I remember, whereby the happiness procured for men by the gift of Christ is set forth in the Scripture, is but *ισαγγελία*, an equality with the angels, or likeness of condition with them, Luke xx. 36. Therefore God's love to the angels that stand doth not fall short, at least to any such considerable degree, of the love which he beareth unto men that are saved. Therefore the reason why he is styled *φιάνθρωπος*, a lover of men, not *φιλάγγελος*, a lover of angels, is not because he loves some men more than he doth any angels, but because he loved all men and not all angels.

Besides, if God should love only such a small parcel of men as some imagine, with the hatred of all the rest, he might much more properly be termed *μισάνθρωπος*, a hater of men, than *φιάνθρωπος*, a lover of men. Whereas, the Scripture frequently extols and magnifies the love of God towards all men, yea, towards his enemies, on whom he maketh his sun to arise, and sendeth rain, as well as on his friends, Matt. v. 45, and strictly enjoineth all those that would be accounted his children to resemble and imitate him in this his goodness; but nowhere suggesteth the least degree of any hatred in him against any person of man, personally considered, nor any other than what doth redundare in personam, as the schoolmen speak, *i. e.* which redoundeth, and, as it were, runs over from the sin which he hateth unto the person in whom that sin is found.

Again, if God should not love the generality of mankind in order to their salvation by Christ, then all the good which he doth unto them in outward things, as in making his sun to arise and his rain to fall upon them, as our Saviour saith he doth upon the unjust as the just, and so his filling of their heart with food and gladness, with the like, must be conceived to be done by him upon such terms and with such intentions as men use to lay scraps for birds or bait hooks for fishes, which they do for none other end but to take and destroy them. For if God hath no intent in these dispensations of his towards them to do them any good in a saving way, he must needs be conceived to intend their ruin and destruction, at least, the increase of their ruin and destruction by them; it being no ways reasonable to conceive but that he hath higher and more considerable ends propounded to himself in his providential administrations about men, in reference unto men, than about beasts, in relation unto them; though it is true he hath the same general and ultimate end, his glory, in all his works and administrations, one or other. But if the generality or far greatest part of men are bound to believe, and bound they are to believe it if it be a revealed truth, that God, in giving them health and peace and prosperity in the world, intends nothing but evil to them, a fuller cup of the wrath and vengeance which is to come, how can the "bountifulness and long-sufferance of God be said to lead men to repentance?" which yet is the apostle's doctrine, Rom. ii. 4. Neither the goodness nor patience of God towards evil men can be said to lead them to repentance but by the mediation or supposal of these three principles: 1. That these dispensations of God, I mean of goodness and patience, towards such men, are proper and sufficient, I mean by the help of that operation of the Spirit of God which always accompanieth them, to bring men to repentance; and, 2, that God's intent is that they should bring them actually to repentance, or at least that he hath no intention otherwise or to the contrary; 3, and lastly, that he truly and really intends their salvation upon their repentance. Wicked men can at no hand of reason, no, nor yet of common sense, be said to be led to repentance by the goodness or long-sufferance of God towards them, unless: 1, it be supposed that there is a genuine, natural, or proper rhetoric or moving tendency in them to persuade and encourage such men to repent; nothing can be said to lead a man to such or such an action or course, but that which is proper to invite or persuade him unto either. Nor unless it be supposed, 2, that God hath an intent that such men should be actually persuaded or made willing to repent by such dispensations, at least that he should have no intentions to the contrary. For how can any man be actually persuaded or made willing by any means, motive, or encouragement whatsoever to attempt or do any such thing which he hath cause to judge or believe that God's intentions stand against his doing or performance? There is no motive or encouragement against the determinate counsel of God made known. Nor 3, and lastly, can the said dispensations of good-

ness or patience in God be said to lead any man to repentance, unless it be yet further supposed that his real intent and purpose is to save him upon his repentance, or in case he shall repent, or at least that they may be such. For what encouragement can any man have to repent, in case he hath sufficient ground to judge that God hath absolutely rejected him and will not save him, no, not upon his repentance? Therefore certainly God hath no intentions of evil, or of condemnation, or of increase of condemnation against the generality of men, no, nor yet against the worst or wickedest of men in those gracious vouchsafements of life, health, liberty, peace, food, raiment, and other the like temporal mercies and accommodations unto them.

Again, How can men look upon themselves as any ways debtors, or obliged unto God in thankfulness, for good things administered unto them with hard intentions, or with a purpose not to bless them, but to make their condemnation so much the greater, and more heavy upon them? If birds and fishes had understanding, and should know for what end, or with what intentions men lay scraps and baits, though made of such things as they love, and stand in need of, in their way, would they thank them for it, or should they have any reason so to do? Or had Amasa any cause to think the better of Joab, for "taking him by the beard with his right hand to kiss him?" 2 Sam. xx. 9. Or our Saviour to think the better of Judas, for the kiss wherewith he greeted him? Matt. xxvi. 49.

Besides, it being the duty of the saints to imitate or resemble their heavenly Father, not only in his outward expressions, but much more in his intentions, and frame of spirit towards men, when he doth good unto them, causing "his sun to arise, and his rain to fall upon them," in case his intentions towards them in such applications of himself unto them, were bent, not upon their salvation, but destruction, would it not follow that when they should perform those Christian services unto them, enjoined by our Saviour himself, "But I say unto you, love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you," &c., Matt. v. 44, they were bound to do all these in order unto, and with an intent to procure, their greater and deeper condemnation, and not with any intent to gain them into the gospel? And if wicked men, enemies to the saints, should know, or have reasonable ground to judge, that when they express themselves outwardly in terms of love, and good-will towards them, they mean them ruin, or increase of punishment and torment hereby, had they not cause to judge them the vilest hypocrites and dissemblers under heaven? Nor do they represent the glorious God himself any whit better unto the world, who affirm and teach, that in and under his most pathetic and moving invitations, encouragements, and promissory offers of grace, mercy, salvation, unto the generality of men, whereof the Scriptures are full, he intends not the donation, or gift of grace, mercy, or salvation unto them, upon any condition or terms whatsoever,

but wrath and judgment, and an opportunity to render them seven-fold more the children of death and condemnation, than otherwise they would or could have been.

Lastly, If God intends the increase of guilt and punishment unto wicked men, or the generality of men, in the comforts and good things of this world providentially disposed and dispensed unto them, he must needs desire the bringing or coming of these accordingly upon them. No man intends any thing in order to the accomplishment of such or such an end, but this end is desired by him. Again, certain it is that the increase of guilt and punishment cannot come upon men, by means, or by occasion, of the good things given by God unto them, but only by the intervening of their unthankfulness, and abuse of these good things, in one kind or other. Further, as there is no man but wisheth and desireth the coming to pass of such things, which are simply and absolutely necessary for the bringing to pass such things as he desireth, so hath no man cause to be offended with any man for the doing of such things, which are simply and absolutely necessary to the effecting of any such end which he desireth; especially when his desire in this kind is raised and built upon foundations of righteousness and sound wisdom, which is not questionable in or about any of the desires of God. Now then, if God intends, he must needs also desire, the increase of guilt and punishment upon wicked men, or the generality of men; if he desires this, he hath no cause to be offended with these men, for their unthankfulness, or for any such abuse of his mercies or good things conferred upon them, without which it was impossible for him to attain his desired end, viz., an increase of guilt and condemnation upon them, as was asserted. The reason is, because, according to our late asserted principle, no man hath cause to be offended with another, for doing that which is directly and absolutely necessary for the bringing to pass of any such end, which is maturely, and according to sound principles of wisdom and righteousness, projected and desired by him. Nor is there the least question to be made, but that if God intends and consequently desires, the increase of guilt and condemnation upon the generality of men, both his intentions and desires in this kind are most regular, in respect of all regularity, that either wisdom or righteousness can give unto them.

Nor will it much, if any thing at all, here help to say that though God doth not intend the salvation of the generality of men in giving unto them the good things of this life to enjoy so abundantly, as for the most part he doth, but the increase of their guilt and condemnation, yet inasmuch as no particular man knoweth but that God may intend his spiritual good and salvation, in such dispensations, all are bound to conceive this hope of themselves, and consequently every man stands bound to be thankful unto God for what he receiveth from him in this kind, and to seek more after him. And if any man shall be found neglective of what is his duty herein, or shall turn the grace of God towards him, even in

these outward things, into wantonness, and not into thankfulness, he deserves to be punished so much the more severely for it. For to this,

I answer: No man stands bound to believe that, or to conceive hope of that which he hath no sufficient ground of believing, or why he should believe it: much less to believe that which he hath much more reason to question or doubt of, than to believe. Solomon informeth us, that it is the property of "a fool to believe every thing," (or every word,) Prov. xiv. 15, viz., as well that which he hath no ground or reason to believe, as that which he hath. And it is commonly said and taught amongst us, that in matters of religion and of salvation, nothing ought to be believed by any man, but what he hath a sufficient ground in or from the word of God to believe. If so, if no man ought to believe, in matters appertaining to salvation, but what he hath a ground or warrant in the word of God to believe; much less ought he to believe any such thing, the truth whereof the word of God administers much more ground to doubt, question, and suspect than to believe. So that if this be a truth revealed in the word of God, that God doth not intend the spiritual good of the generality, or of far the greatest part of men, in their outward mercies and good things, but the contrary; certain it is that every particular man, at least, that hath no sufficient proof of his regeneration, hath ten, twenty, if not an hundred times more reason to doubt and question, whether his spiritual good be intended by God, or no, in the things we speak of, than to believe that it is intended. As in the business of a lottery, where there are forty, it may be a hundred blanks for one prize, no man hath so much reason or ground to hope, that he shall draw a prize, in case he should adventure his money this way, as that he shall draw a blank. And upon this account, lotteries have still been accounted little better than cheats, or unworthy devices contrived gin-wise, to catch the money of simple and inconsiderate people, men of understanding easily discerning the fraud, and so keeping their foot out of the snare. And whether that doctrine, which teacheth that God intendeth only the salvation of a few, but the condemnation of many, and yet commandeth all to believe that they may be saved, doth not make the glorious gospel of God like unto one of such lotteries, I leave to all understanding and unprejudiced men to consider.

In the meantime, evident it is that this opinion, that Christ died not for all men, but for some few only, is, as it were, calculated, and the face of it bent and set, to make the distance between heaven and earth, between God and his creature man, greater and wider than yet it is; to multiply jealousies and hard thoughts in the hearts and minds of men and women concerning God, where they are more than apt enough to engender and multiply, without the irritation of such a doctrine. Yea, whereas God hath put himself into his Christ, ("God was in Christ," saith the apostle, as we heard formerly, Chap. v., "reconciling the world unto himself,") that by

the means of him, and by the tender and promise of forgiveness of sins unto men through him, upon the gracious terms of believing he might prevail with the world to love him, to think well and honourably of him ; this doctrine seeks to put him out of his Christ again, at least in reference to any such glorious design as that of reconciling the world unto him ; yea, and saith, in effect, unto the world itself, Believe him not, though he speaketh ever so graciously unto you : when he promiseth you life and salvation upon the fairest and freest terms, he hath war in his heart against you, and intendeth to destroy you.

If it be yet objected, that, upon the same ground, no particular person should have any particular ground or reason to believe that he is one of those that shall be saved, inasmuch as the number of those that shall be saved is affirmed to be but small ; I answer,

True it is, no man is bound to believe, simply and absolutely, that he is one of those that shall be saved, but conditionally only, viz. in case he shall believe, and persevere believing unto the end. All that a man is bound to believe in this kind positively is, that he is one of those that may be saved ; and the doctrine asserted by us, viz. that Christ died for all men without exception, administereth a fair ground and full footing for such a faith as this unto every man ; whereas the doctrine opposite hereunto, which affirmeth that Christ died for the elect only, leaveth no foundation or ground at all of this faith unto any man whatsoever, at least being yet in his natural condition, and unconverted. For, 1, if only those men be in a possibility of being saved for whom Christ died ; and, 2, if Christ died for the elect only ; and, 3, if no unregenerate or unconverted person hath any ground to believe that he is one of God's elect ; it roundly follows, and with pregnancy of consequence, that no such person (I mean, who is yet unconverted,) hath any sufficient ground to believe that he is one of those that may be, or that is in a possibility of being saved. All the said hypotheses or premises, (as, viz. 1. That no man is in a possibility of being saved, but only those for whom Christ died ; 2. That Christ died only for the elect ; and, 3. That no unregenerate person hath any sufficient ground to believe that he is one of the elect,) are authentic and unquestionable, according to the known principles of our adversaries ; therefore the conclusion specified must be admitted and owned by them. If they will admit the said conclusion, and judge it no way prejudicial, either to themselves or their cause, so to do, I would demand of them what foundation of encouragement they can lay to persuade unregenerate men either to "strive to enter in at the strait gate," to "labour for the meat that endureth to everlasting life," or to apply themselves, seriously and effectually, in one kind or other, to the means of believing. We know that without hope, or an apprehended possibility of obtaining what is endeavoured and sought after, all motives or grounds of persuasion unto action amount to no more than to the beating of the air : the hearts of men are not at all taken or wrought by them. Despair of salvation quencheth all thoughts, all endeavours, all desires of believ-

ing; therefore, if an unregenerate person hath no sufficient ground of hope that he is one of those who are so much as in a possibility of being saved, he is not capable of any impressions from any ground or motive whatsoever to believing.

If it be here said, Though an unregenerate person hath no sufficient ground of hope that he *is* one of God's elect, and consequently, that Christ died for him, yet he hath sufficient ground of hope that he *may be* one of these, and so that there is a possibility that Christ *may* have died for him; and upon the account of such a hope as this, he hath encouragement sufficient to apply himself to the means of believing; I answer,

1. That such a hope, which amounts only, or very little more than, to a bare apprehended possibility of obtaining, hath but a very feeble and faint influence upon the heart of a considering man, by way of encouragement unto action, especially unto such action which is of a laborious and difficult import, and wherein he must deny himself in matters of ease, pleasure, profit, &c., and this to an eminent degree. Now, it is generally known, that that action or course of engagement wherein they must labour and exercise themselves who desire to believe unto salvation, is of such an import as we speak of: it is a course of action wherein men must put forth or give out themselves "with all their heart, and with all their soul, with all their mind, and with all their strength," wherein they must labour, strive, watch, and pray continually, deny themselves, crucify the old man, &c., or otherwise not expect salvation.

2. Neither is it so clear a truth, especially according to the principles of those against whom we now argue, that an unregenerate man hath a sufficient ground of hope that he may be one of the elect; for if he be not at present one of these, there is no possibility, according to the said principles, that ever he should be such. If it be replied, that the meaning of this assertion, a regenerate man has a sufficient ground of hope that he may be one of the elect, is not that he may be one of these hereafter, whether he be one of them at present or no, but that he may be one of them at the present; I answer, that hope, in propriety of import, respecteth not what is or may be at present, but what may be, or is like to be in the future. Nor do I remember any instance throughout the Scriptures where they make or suppose any other object of hope, but only that which is or may be future; nor that any definition of hope given by learned divines assigneth any other; so that it is very improper, at least, to say, that an unregenerate man hath ground of hope that he may be, at present, one of God's elect. But,

3. A little to indulge impropriety of terms, I demand whether the Scriptures do not constantly represent and make unregeneracy, or an unbelieving condition, especially joined with an habitual practice of known sins, a ground of fear that a man is not at present one of the elect of God; or rather, whether they do not make such a condition a ground of certain knowledge that a man is not at present one of the elect of God? According to the principles of the adverse party in the question in hand, all the elect shall certainly

be saved, and inherit the kingdom of God; but the Scriptures constantly teach and affirm, that unbelievers and unregenerate men, especially living in known sins, "shall not inherit the kingdom of God," as we have in the two next preceding chapters shown at large; therefore, unless we shall say that the Scriptures are divided in themselves, it is impossible to show or prove that they anywhere exhibit or afford any ground of hope to such unregenerate and unbelieving persons as we now speak of, that they may be, at present, the elect of God. The Scripture nowhere excludes the elect of God from salvation, but everywhere asserts them as heirs hereof; therefore, those whom it excludes from part and fellowship in this business, are not, at least in Scripture sense, nor, indeed, in any sense consistent with reason, the elect of God.

4. If such unregenerate persons as we speak of have any sufficient ground to hope that they *may* be, at present, the elect of God, then have they the like ground of hope that they *are* at present of this number, and the elect of God. The reason of this sequel is plain; because what a man is, and what he may be at present, are one and the same; it being impossible that he should be at present any thing besides, or any other than what he is at present, no subject whatsoever being capable of any otherness or alteration in an instant; according to that known maxim in natural philosophy, *Motus non fit in instanti*, No motion can be in an instant of time; as also that other, *Quicquid est, quando est, necesse est esse*; *i. e.* whatsoever is, whilst it is, must of necessity be (that which it is.) Therefore he that hath ground to hope that he *may be* one of God's elect at present, hath ground, yea, the same ground, to hope that he *is* such an one at present. Now if such an unregenerate man as hath been oft mentioned hath a sufficient ground of hope that he is at present one of God's elect, then have the generality of wicked and unregenerate men, respectively, a sufficient ground of hope that they are all, and every person of them, the elect of God. For if any one of this sort of persons hath a sufficient ground of hope in this kind, then have they all and every one the same; for no ground of difference between them in this case is imaginable. But how ill it accords with sundry the grounds and principles of our adversaries to affirm, That all the world, which, as John saith, lieth in wickedness, should have sufficient ground of hope that they are the elect of God, I leave to themselves to consider. Therefore certainly no unregenerate person, such especially as we lately described, hath any sufficient ground of hope that he is at present one of the elect of God; and consequently, the doctrine we oppose for denying that Christ died for all men without exception, leaveth no place or ground of any such hope unto unregenerate persons which is likely to engage or provoke them unto any gospel inquiry or addressment of themselves to the means of believing; no, nor yet which leaves them in any capacity of being wrought or persuaded hereunto, by any other motives or inducements whatsoever.

5, and lastly, In case unregenerate men should, by the leave and

sufferance of the said doctrine, be under any such hope as it asserts unto them, (I mean that they may be the elect of God in that sense of the word elect, which the patrons of this doctrine commonly put upon it,) yet would not this hope be apt or likely to animate or encourage them to such applications of themselves as those specified, no nor yet suffer them to be much affected with or wrought upon in this kind by any other motives or means of excitement whatsoever. The reason hereof hath been formerly given, where we showed and proved that such a hope which hath certainty of success or attainment absolutely and unconditionally insured unto it, is not of that kind of hope which is likely to engage much unto action;\* I here add, and have added, That the very genius or import of it is rather to render the subject of it unengageable unto action by other motives. And thus we clearly see, by a thorough examination and debate of the whole business, that the doctrine of our present contest, and which denieth that Christ died for all men, leaveth no ground of hope for any person whatsoever in his natural condition, that he either is or may be one of those, who are in any possibility of being saved by Christ: and consequently must needs be a doctrine anti-evangelical in the highest. This for the opening and asserting of the philanthropy of God avouched in the Scriptures.

When the apostle writeth thus to the Hebrews, "For if we sin willingly after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth *no more sacrifice* for sins," Heb. x. 26, he clearly supposeth, that they, for whose sins there was an expiatory sacrifice offered by Christ, may by apostasy and a rejection of the grace of this sacrifice, reduce themselves to such a condition, wherein they shall be incapable of any atonement for sin by any sacrifice whatsoever. For this clause, "there remaineth *no more sacrifice* for sins," evidently implieth, 1. That before the horrid sin of apostasy, here spoken of, the persons that fall into it, have, or had, a sacrifice for their sins, viz., for the expiation and atonement of them, which can be no other but the sacrifice of the death of Christ. In saying "there remaineth no more" (or, *οὐκ ἔτι*, not still, or, not further,) a sacrifice for sins, he must of necessity suppose, that till that sad alteration in their spiritual estate here described by their sinning wilfully after, &c. should befall them, they were partakers of a sacrifice for the expiation of their sins, which, as hath been said, must needs be the death of Christ; otherwise they should have been in no worse case, as to matter of receiving benefit by the death or sacrifice of Christ, after their apostasy than before. 2. That upon, and after this alteration, they are, either absolutely and altogether excluded from a re-admission into their former grace, whereby they were partakers of the sacrifice of Christ, or at least that they stand upon terms of extreme difficulty ever to obtain such a re-admission. So that this passage of Scripture befriendeth

\* Chap. X. page 262, and Chap. XIII. page 407.

both the main doctrines avouched in the first part of our discourse, with pregnancy of confirmation, respectively. For, 1. It supposeth that Christ offered the sacrifice of himself for the sins of those, who very possibly may never be saved by him, and consequently, for all men without exception, for concerning those that come to be saved by him, there is no question. And 2. That they who have been partakers of the sacrifice of Christ, and hereby of the grace and favour of God, in the pardon of their sins, may afterwards apostatise into such a condition wherein "there remains no more sacrifice for their sins, but a certain looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation," &c. Calvin himself knew not, it seems, how to manage the place, but with full comport of the sense given. "There is a great difference," saith he upon the place, "between particular fallings and such a universal defection, whereby it cometh to pass that we *wholly fall away* from the grace of Christ. But because this cannot befall any man, but him who is enlightened, therefore he saith, If we sin willingly after we have received the knowledge of the truth: as if he should say, Who shall willingly *cast away that grace which he had obtained.*" A little after, "He (the apostle) denies that any sacrifice remains for those, who *depart from the death of Christ*, which is not done by any particular delinquency, but by a *casting away of faith totally.*"\* Doubtless, they who depart from the death of Christ, were sometimes at it, (*i. e.* partakers of it,) and they who cast away faith totally, sometimes had it. And long before Calvin, Chrysostom had declared for the substance of the interpretation given. "That which the apostle saith," saith he upon the place, "is some such thing as this: Thou hast been cleansed, thou hast been discharged from matter of crime, or accusation against thee, thou hast been made a son: if now, thou shalt return to thy former vomit, disinheritance, fire, and all such like (terrible) things abide thee; for there is not a second sacrifice" for thee.†

We shall, upon the account of this chapter, produce only one brief passage of Scripture more, wherein the gracious intentions of God towards all men in point of salvation by the death of Christ, are like Solomon's "king upon his throne, against whom there is no rising up." The entire verse, wherein the words we mind are extant, runneth thus: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," 2 Pet. iii. 9. Evident it is, and expositors

\* Porro multum interest inter particulares lapsus, et universalem ejusmodi defectionem, quâ fit ut à Christi gratiâ in totum excidamus. Quia autem nemini hoc contingere potest nisi qui jam illuminatus fuit, ided dixit, voluntariè post acceptam veritatis noticiam peccantibus; ac si diceret, Qui sciens ac volens gratiam, quam adeptus erat, abjecerit. Et paulo post: Hostiam ergo iis residuam esse negat, qui à Christi morte discedunt: quod fit non particulari aliquo delicto, sed abjectâ in totum fide.

† "Ὁ δὲ λέγει τοιοῦτόν ἐστιν ἐκαθάρθης, ἀπηλλάγης ἐγκλημάτων, γέγονας υἱός· ἀν τοίνυν ἐπὶ τὸν πρότερον ἔμετον ἐπιστρέψῃς πάλιν, ἀποκηρυξίς μὲναι, καὶ πῦρ, καὶ ὅσα τοιαῦτα· οὐ γάρ ἐστι θυσία δευτέρα.

generally consent, that the apostle in these words propounds a further reason or consideration to satisfy those that, being weak, were apt to stumble and take offence, that the Lord Christ delayed his coming to judge the world and to deliver his saints so long. No man, saith the apostle in effect upon this account, hath any reason to be offended or take it amiss at the hand of Christ that he makes no more haste in coming to judge the world, seeing that his delay in this kind proceeds not at all from any neglect or backwardness in him to perform his promise in that behalf, (though some men count all delay which is contrary to their minds and desires, to be no better than neglect or slackness unto action,) but from his great patience and long-sufferance towards men; his will and desire being that no person whatsoever of mankind, either in present being in the world, or that shall be born hereafter, should perish everlastingly, but that every man of them should come to repentance, whereunto his patience and long-sufferance inviteth, yea, and "leadeth them," Rom. ii. 4; and by which many are actually led and brought unto it, that so they may be saved. From the passage thus understood, I argue thus: If Christ be not willing that any man should perish, but that all should come to repentance, then questionless he intendeth the salvation of all, and consequently died intentionally for all; for unless he intended to die for them, yea, and did die for them, it is not possible that he should either will or intend their salvation, inasmuch as no man can will or intend that which he knows to be impossible: But certain it is that Christ is not willing that any man should perish, but that all should come to repentance, the Holy Ghost, in the Scripture in hand, expressly affirming it: Ergo.

Against the sense and interpretation of the words given, and so to the invalidating of the argument built thereon, it is pretended by some that the apostle doth not here assert an unwillingness in Christ that any person whatsoever of mankind should perish, but only that any person of the elect should perish. To give colour to this exposition, they circumscribe the particle or pronoun ἡμᾶς, "us," with the limit or line of their election, so carrying the sense thus: "The Lord is not slack," &c. . . . "but is long-suffering to us-ward," viz. who are his elect, and consequently to all others that are partakers of the same election with us, "not willing that any," viz. of these, the elect of his Father, "should perish, but that all" these "should come to repentance," not any others. This sense of the place is commended by Estius, a Popish expositor; but we shall find Calvin leaning with the truth another way. "So, then, Peter," saith Estius upon the place, "saith that the Lord dealeth patiently, *i. e.* delayeth his promised coming and judgment for the elect's sake, that they might not perish, but, being converted to repentance, be saved.\*"

\* Sic ergo Petrus dicit Dominum patienter agere, *i. e.* adventum promissum et iudicium suum differre, propter electos, ut ne pereant, sed ad penitentiam conversi salventur, &c.—  
*Estius in 2 Pet. iii. 9.*

This exposition he labours in the very fire to make to stand; but, as one said in another case, "Oportet aliquid intus esse," an exposition that hath not truth in it, cannot be made to stand.

1. I would demand of this expositor, and of those who sense with him in the interpretation specified, why, or by what authority, they expound *εις ημᾶς*, "towards us" the elect, rather than "towards us" believers? For if they will needs have the persons here spoken unto to be considered by the apostle not in their natures or general capacities, viz. as they were men, but in some particular or special capacity wherein other men or all men did not partake with them, the capacity of saintship or of faith was as near at hand as that of election. For that the persons we speak of were saints and believers, is far less questionable than that they were elect, in their sense of the word election, who thus interpret. It is true what Estius allegeth to credit his exposition, that this epistle was written to the same persons with the former, who are styled "elect," 1 Pet. i. 2. But, 1. Whether his "elect" and the apostle's "elect" be the same, is very questionable; unless, haply, the apostle puts it out of the question that they are not the same, by setting forth his "elect," in the place cited, by such a description which will not agree with Estius's "elect." Estius, with the generality of divines amongst us, by his "elect" understands as well those that shall repent and believe hereafter, though they be at present "sons of Belial," and "to every good work reprobate," as the apostle speaketh, as those who actually do believe: whereas Peter, in the place now mentioned, estimateth his *elect* by "the sanctification," *i. e.* the actual sanctification "of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, according to the foreknowledge," or pre-approbation, "of God;" *i. e.* as God approved and judged it meet, and consequently decreed from eternity to regulate his election of men in time. But this only by the way: for as to this Scripture, with others which treat of election, we shall, God favouring, speak more fully in due time. 2. Though the epistle was, as this author allegeth, written to the same persons with the former, who in the beginning of the said former epistle are termed "elect," yet are these persons, in this very epistle, and much nearer to the place in hand, described or considered in their capacity of believing: "Simon Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious *faith* with us," 2 Pet. i. 1, &c. So that, in this respect, there is much more reason why, in the place in question, he should speak unto them, or consider them, as believers with himself, than as "elect" with himself, in such a notion of election wherein "elect" are distinguished from believers, as was lately declared. But now to make the apostle to say that God is patient towards us, *believers*, "not willing that any" of us who *believe* "should perish, but that all" *we* "should come to repentance," is to make him speak beneath the line of common sense. For, 1. The patience of

God towards believers, who are in a present capacity of salvation, and according to the principles of our adversaries, out of all possibility of perishing, is no means of their non-perishing; neither need he be patient towards them in reference to any such end. 2. Neither have these need to "come to repentance" in order to their non-perishing, unless we shall suppose them in a possibility of a total loss of that faith that is in them, yea, and that they will de facto totally lose it.

2. That the apostle doth not, in the place in hand, speak of the Christians to whom he writes as they were "elect," in the common sense of the word, appears from hence, viz. because, in case there were any "elect" in this sense, the patience of God towards them would be no argument or sign of his non-willing their perishing, or of his willing that they should "come to repentance;" because he shows the same, or greater patience, towards such persons who are not "elect," in that sense, and who never come to believe or repent.

3. The Lord is not here said to be "not willing that any" of the elect "should perish," or, "but that all" these "should come to repentance," but simply and indefinitely, "that any should perish," *μη βουλόμενός τις ἀπολείσθαι*; and universally, "but that all, *πάντας*, should come to repentance." Now, these indefinite particles, *τις*, *τινίς*, as likewise these universals, *πᾶς*, *πάντες*, do frequently in Scripture (we shall not need to cite places, being so numerous and obvious) signify men, simply and absolutely considered; the former partitively, distributively and sometimes interrogatively; the latter universally; but no instance, I presume, can be found, where either the one or the other signifies men in any special capacity, or under any particular consideration, unless, haply, it be where such capacity or consideration is either in the same period, or else in the same contexture of speech, and near at hand, particularly mentioned and expressed. Now concerning the place in debate, certain it is, that the capacity or consideration of "election" is not only not at all mentioned or specified in the same period, nor yet in the same passage or contexture of Scripture, or any where near at hand, but not so much as in all the epistle from first to last. Therefore, doubtless, *τινίς*, "any," and *πάντας*, "all," do not here signify any of the "elect," and all the "elect," but any men, and all men.

4. Neither can God, in any tolerable construction or propriety of speech or sense, be said to be patient or "long-suffering" towards those whom he loves with the greatest love that is, and this unchangeable, (for such is the love of election supposed by those against whom we argue to be,) especially if it be supposed withal, (which these men suppose likewise,) that though they be wicked, yet they cannot repent, cannot cease to be wicked, until God comes with a strong and irresistible hand to cause them to repent. For when we ardently and affectionately love a person, one or more, we cannot reasonably be said to be patient towards them, though we do not punish them for such miscarriages or actions wherein

they are prejudicial unto us, in case we know it to have been impossible for them to forbear such actions, unless we ourselves had effectually restrained them from them. It would not argue any patience in a parent towards his young infant, which he tenderly loves, to forbear correcting it, in case it should let fall and break a Venice glass, or some like brittle commodity, which were put into the hand of it. Patience, we know, is a grace, or virtue, whereby a man is enabled and disposed to moderate the natural passion of anger, and to prevent the exorbitant and undue motions of it. So that patience hath no place or opportunity to express itself, but only in such cases wherein this passion is apt to be stirred and provoked. Now the passion we speak of, anger, is not apt to be raised or provoked, but only by such actions wherein or whereby we apprehend either ourselves, or some nearly relating to us, to be neglected or despised, according to the philosopher's discourse and description of it, wherein he mentions *ὀλιγωρία*, the neglect or contempt of a person, or of some related to him, as always the cause of it;\* which description, if need were, we might show to be very agreeable to what the Scriptures themselves deliver concerning the same passion. So then, in case there be no ground or reason upon which God can judge himself, or any of his, neglected or despised, by the impenitency of his "elect" in their sinful ways, whilst they continue in them, he cannot be said to be patient or "long-suffering" towards them, though he forbears to punish them with death for it. Now when that only is done by a man, which he is, either in one kind or other, necessitated to do, and cannot possibly refrain the doing it, no person whatsoever, what damage soever he may receive by what is done upon such terms, hath any sufficient ground to judge himself, or any of his, neglected or despised in such an action, nor consequently to be provoked unto anger by it.

5. Neither can the "elect," in such a sense as many call elect, truly or reasonably "account the long-suffering of the Lord salvation" unto them, which yet the persons here spoken of and to are in the sequel of this chapter enjoined to do, "And account that the long-suffering of the Lord is salvation," ver. 15; for they that have salvation infallibly and infrustrably, against and above "death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present, things to come, height, depth, every creature" whatsoever, ascertained, assigned, or designed, by the irrevocable decree of God unto them, stand in no need of any respite or reprieve from death through the "long-sufferance" of God, in order to the obtainment of salvation. Because, in case they should die, either the first moment that they are born into the world, or after never so much sin committed, yet the decree of God concerning their salvation, being peremptory, absolute, and irresistible, must needs take place, and produce their salvation, against all obstructions and impediments whatsoever.

\* *Ἐστω δὲ ἡ ὀργή, ὁρεῖς μετὰ λύπης τιμωρίας φαινομένης διὰ φαινομένην ὀλιγωρίαν τῶν εἰς αὐτὸν, ἢ εἰς αὐτοῦ τινα, μὴ προσηκόντως.*—*Arist. Rhet.* ii. cap. 2.

Therefore, as a man hath no reason to set any such high price upon a receipt prescribed unto him by a physician, in order to his health, as to call it "his life," or the emphatical means of his preservation, in case his life would certainly have been preserved without it; so neither have the "elect" any competent reason or ground to call or "count the long-suffering of the Lord" towards them "*salvation*," (*i. e.* a signal means or opportunity of salvation to them,) in case this their salvation might, and certainly should, have been obtained by them, or conferred on them, whether any such "long-suffering" had been vouchsafed unto them or no. If it be said, That as the salvation of the saints is infallibly decreed, so is it with the like infallibility decreed to be effected by the "long-sufferance" of God towards them, as the means and opportunity thereof, and in this respect they may properly enough be required to "count," or esteem, the "long-suffering" of God towards them "*salvation*;" I answer, If the decree of God concerning the salvation of the saints be absolute and infallible, in the sense asserted and contended for by our opposers, then cannot the execution of this decree, the actual saving of the saints, be suspended upon any fallible or contingent condition, such as is the saints' accounting the long-sufferance of God to be salvation to them, or their managing this long-suffering of his in due order to their salvation; no more than the standing or continuance of a house, that is well and strongly built upon a rock, depends upon those weak or rotten shores or props which are applied unto it to support it. Nor can God be said absolutely and infallibly to decree the coming to pass of such things, which are essentially in themselves, and in their own natures, contingent, it being a maxim generally granted by our adversaries themselves, That the decrees of God have no real influence upon their objects, or things decreed, at least no such which altereth their natures, or essential properties of their beings. It is a common saying amongst them, that *prædestinatio nihil ponit in prædestinato*, *i. e.* predestination putteth nothing in or into either the thing or person predestinated. And if predestination putteth nothing in or into the things or persons predestinated, there is no reason to judge that any other of his decrees doth any whit more. And if the decrees of God relating unto contingent events should have any such influx upon them, which alters their natures, and changeth the fundamental laws of their beings, transforming them into things absolutely necessary, or necessary with any such necessity which is unavoidable, contingency would be only a name, or matter of mere speculation, God having, with the same infallibility and absoluteness of decree, as say our adversaries, decreed things contingent and things necessary, and consequently made all things, as to matter of event and coming to pass, necessary. So that the salvation of the saints is not absolutely decreed by God to be effected by his long-suffering towards them: nor could this long-suffering be reasonably by them accounted salvation, in case their salvation were so absolutely decreed unto them, as our contrary-minded brethren suppose. Therefore,

6, and lastly, When the apostle saith, that "the Lord is long-suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all," &c. his meaning must needs be, that he is long-suffering towards men, simply and indefinitely considered, or towards mankind; and that this long-suffering of his towards them, proceeds out of a gracious and merciful disposition in him, which inclineth him not to will or desire the destruction of any person or soul of them, but that they may generally, one and other, by the advantage and opportunity of his goodness and long-sufferance towards them, be so overcome, as to repent unfeignedly of their sins, and turn unto him, that they may be saved. This interpretation,

1. Perfectly accords with the words, in their genuine, proper, and best known significations: whereas the other, as we lately proved, requires such a sense and signification of the two particles, *τις*, and *πάντας*, any and all, wherein they are not to be found throughout the Scriptures.

2. The series and story of the context falls in much more genuinely and fairly with this than with that other interpretation; the scope of the words being, as we formerly likewise showed, to vindicate the delay which the Lord Christ maketh, in not performing his promise of coming to judgment with so much celerity and expedition, as some conceive it meet that he should perform it, from any pretence or plea, that can in a way of reason render it offensive unto any man. Now, look, out of how much the greater, richer, and larger mercy and goodness towards the poor children of men, this delay of his shall be found to proceed, and by how much greater the number of those are, whose benefit and blessedness shall appear to be intended by it and concerned in it, it must needs be conceived to be proportionably so much the further off from being any just matter of offence unto any man, than it would be in case it should be occasioned by any straitness of bowels, or the good intended by it be conceived to relate only to a few.

3. The sense of the words and place, which this interpretation exhibiteth, is more clearly parallel, and consistent with the mind of the Holy Ghost in other Scriptures, than that which is issued by the other. The Scripture no where, or at least no where so much, commendeth the patience or long-sufferance of God determinately towards his elect, or towards believers, in reference to their repentance or salvation, as towards the generality of men, and more especially towards those that are wicked and ungodly. "But we are sure," saith the apostle Paul, "that the judgment of God is according to truth, against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance. But thou," &c. Rom. ii. 2—4. And God himself, by his prophet Ezekiel, speaketh thus to the wicked and stiff-necked Jews in general: "Turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin." And further,

“For why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye,” Ezek. xviii. 30—32. And elsewhere by the same prophet: “Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his ways and live. Turn ye, turn ye, from your evil ways: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” Ezek. xxxiii.

11. Our apostle himself, speaking of the wicked generation of the old world, and of God’s patience towards them, saith thus: “Which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah,” &c. 1 Pet. iii. 20. Not to multiply places, that of the apostle Paul, formerly opened,\* is of much affinity with the words in hand: “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” 2 Tim. ii. 4. In all these passages, unto which many more of like import might readily have been added, the gracious intendments of God in his patience, towards the generality of men, and more especially towards the wicked, are very emphatically asserted, and this by way of encouragement and invitation unto them to repent, that so they might be saved. But concerning any such intentions of God in his patience, determinately towards believers, or his elect, I find the Scriptures silent altogether.

4, and lastly, The sense of the Scripture in hand contended for is attested by Mr. Calvin himself, over and over. “The apostle,” saith he, “checketh the too much and preposterous haste” that some made “by another reason, viz. because the Lord doth therefore defer his coming, that” hereby “he may invite all mankind” or the whole of mankind “unto repentance.” A little after, thus: “And indeed there is the same consideration to be had, of the duration of the whole world, which there is of every man’s life in particular. For God, by affording” or enlarging “time to every particular man, forbearth them till they may” or that they may “repent. So, likewise, he makes no haste of putting an end unto the world, that he may give unto *all men* a space to repent.”† Aretius in his brief commentary upon the place, compares it, for sense and import, with three of those four texts lately cited, viz., Rom. ii., Ezek. xviii., 1 Tim. ii. 4, in all which, as we observed, the patience of God towards the generality of men, or towards sinful men, in order to their repentance and salvation hereupon, is clearly avouched: but not the least mention or intimation of any confinement or appropriation of this his patience, or intendments either of repentance or salvation therein, unto righteous men, or his elect. Therefore, questionless, this orthodox author also correspondeth with us in the interpretation given. Dr. Ames upon the place acknowledgeth, that “the patience of God in its own nature

\* Chap. VI. p. 166, and Chap. XII. p. 381.

† *Aliâ ratione nimiam ac præposteram festinationem compescit, nempe quòd Dominus adventum suum ideo differat, ut totum humanum genus ad pœnitentiam invitet. Et paulo post: Atque omnino de totius mundi duratione idem quod de cujusque hominis vitâ sentiendum est. Deus enim tempus singulis prorogando, sustinet eos quoad respiciant. Similiter finem mundi ideo non accelerat, ut det omnibus respiciendi spatium.—Calv. in 2 Pet. iii. 9.*

hath this use and end, viz., to allure" or invite "sinners unto repentance: Rom. ii. 4. And in this sense," he granteth that "their exposition may be admitted, who understand these words, and the like, of all and every particular man."\* But whereas he adds that "the apostle in this place particularly respected the elect," and for proof saith that he speaks of the elect, ver. 8, and numbereth himself with those of whom he speaketh: we answer briefly, 1. That he doth not speak, ver. 8, of the elect, as such, or in their capacity of election, but only styles those, to whom he there speaks, beloved; which only imports his affection towards them, as they were saints, or believers, or rather as they were so judged by him. 2. Whereas he numbers himself with those to whom and of whom he speaketh, it no ways proveth or supposeth that he numbereth himself in respect of his election, with them, or of his saintship, especially considering that he speaketh not, either to them or of them, as they were elect, as we have proved at large in the traverse of the words. And whereas he grants, that "the patience of God, hath in its own nature this use and end, that it allures" or draws "sinners to repentance;" doth he conceive, that this nature of it is altered or changed for the worse, by any intentions of God, in respect of what sinners soever? Or doth he think that God dissolveth or destroyeth the proper operativeness or tendency of any of his dispensations, in order, either to procure the perpetration of more sin in the world, or to the extenuation of the demerit or punishment of men who live and die impenitent and obdurate in their sins? Or is there any other end imaginable, but only one, or both of these, why the patience of God, which in its own nature, hath this use and end, to draw sinners to repentance, should be divested of them by God?

But against the exposition given, and maintained, some things are objected. First, If the Lord Christ should defer his coming, or be patient towards all men without exception, in order to their repentance, that so they may not perish, he must defer it for ever, and so never come; inasmuch as that day will never come, wherein all men will repent.

To this I answer, That it is neither the sense of the text, nor yet of the interpretation given, that Christ should be patient unto all men, or defer his coming until all men without exception should actually repent; but that his intent and desire in his patience towards all men, is that they should repent and be saved, and that he doth by his patience and long-suffering towards all men, afford unto them means and opportunities sufficient to bring them all to repentance. How such intentions and desires in God and in Christ, which are real and cordial, may yet very possibly never take place, or be fulfilled, hath been shown, in part, formerly,† and remains to be further opened in convenient place.

\* *Patentia Dei ex sua natura illum usum et finem habet, ut alliciat peccatores ad resipiscendum; Rom. ii. 4. Atque eo sensu posset admitti eorum explicatio, qui ista verba et similia, intelligunt de omnibus et singulis.*

† Chap. II. p. 67; Chap. III. p. 80, 83, &c.; and Chap. X. p. 292.

Another objection levied by some against the interpretation avouched, which yet in part falls in with the former, and is already fallen with it, is this: If Christ certainly knows, knoweth beforehand, that all men without exception will not repent, or will not be saved, how can it be thought that he should will, intend, or desire, that they should repent or that they should be saved? Doth any sober man will, or intend such a thing, which he certainly knows beforehand will never be effected?

To this sufficient answer hath been given in the premises,\* where we delivered this for a general rule, to direct to a right understanding of Scripture anthropopathies, and attributions of human things unto God; viz. "That it is not necessary that all things accompanying, or relating unto those affections or impressions in men, which are attributed unto God, should be paralleled in him, or have something in his nature corresponding to them: but that it is a sufficient ground or reason for the attribution, in case the human affection or impression attributed to him, be, in respect of any one particular, appertaining to it in men, paralleled, or analogised, in the nature of God." Which rule I explain in the place referred unto by several instances. From hence it follows, though sober men never intend, or will, what they certainly know beforehand will never come to pass, that yet God may, and so Christ, without any reflexion of disparagement unto him in the least, intend and will what he certainly foreknoweth, in such a sense as foreknowledge is appropriable unto him, of which formerly,\* will never come to pass. The reason is, because intentions, and acts of willing, which are properly and formally in men, and not in God, are not attributed unto God, in all, or every respect, or in respect of all circumstances, which relate unto them in men, but in respect only of such productions or effects, as they ordinarily produce in men. As for example, when men will or intend such or such a thing, if the act of their will in this case be raised to any considerable strength or height of willing, they engage themselves in the use of such means, for the effecting of what they intend, or will, in this kind, which they judge competent and sufficient hereunto. In like manner God in propriety of Scripture language, is said to intend, and will, the repentance and salvation of men, because he vouchsafeth a sufficiency of means unto them to effect their repentance and salvation hereupon, and chargeth them from heaven to use these means accordingly. And inasmuch as he vouchsafeth this sufficiency of means unto, and imposeth the charge we speak of upon, all men without exception, he may upon good grounds be said to intend or will the repentance and salvation of all without exception. It is a common saying amongst all expositors of Scripture, as well Protestant as Popish, that "*humana transferuntur in Deum, non affectivè, sed effectivè:*" *i. e.* human passions or affections, are ascribed unto God, not by way of affect, but effect; *i. e.* not because the affections themselves are in him,

\* Chap. III. p. 77, 80, 83, &c.

but because there proceed such effects from him, which are like unto the effects that flow from such affections in men.

If it be here demanded; but if God certainly foreseeeth, or foreknoweth that the means and opportunities which he vouchsafeth unto men, to bring them to repentance and so to salvation, will miscarry, and never take effect, but turn to so much the greater condemnation of those, to whom they are vouchsafed, can any vouchsafement of such means and opportunities as these unto men be interpreted, or looked upon, as proceeding from any love or grace in him towards such persons, who he certainly knows beforehand will reject them? or as any ways obliging such persons unto thankfulness? If I certainly knew that the gift of a hundred pounds unto my son, or friend, would turn to some sad inconvenience unto them, as to the destruction of their lives, to the bereaving of them of their wits, or the like, would it be matter of love, kindness, or respect in me towards them, to give it unto them? or should I not deal more kindly by them, not to give it in such a case? To this I answer,

1. When God vouchsafeth unto men things which are in themselves and in their natures good, beneficial, and of worthy concernment unto men, and they who receive them very capable of employing them accordingly, he no ways hindering them from making an answerable use of them, but many ways encouraging, persuading, and pressing them hereunto, is there any reason or colour of a reason why he should be thought less gracious or loving to such men, only because he knows beforehand that they will make no such use of them? Or would the same or the like vouchsafements from him savour of any whit the more grace, love, or goodness, in case it could or should be supposed that he were ignorant what use such men would make of them, or whether they would convert them to their destruction or no? Or is there any reason that the knowledge of God should be turned to the prejudice or disparagement of his goodness?

2. As he certainly foresees that some men *will* turn his grace into wantonness and render themselves liable to the greater condemnation by the abuse of those means which he vouchsafeth unto them for their salvation, so he as certainly knows and foreseeeth likewise, that they *may* do otherwise if they please, I mean improve these means to the obtaining of salvation, that his foresight of what they *will* do notwithstanding. For the foreknowledge which is in God of what men *will* do neither imposeth nor supposeth any absolute necessity of their doing it;\* neither have they ever a whit the less liberty or power to refrain from doing it, because of God's foreknowledge that they *will* do it. Nor would they have ever a whit the more liberty or power to refrain an action or course in case it should be supposed that God doth not certainly foresee what they will do on either hand, refrain, or act and practise. So that

\* Futura contingētia, etiā ut subsunt divinæ scientiæ, non sunt simpliciter necessaria. — *Rada. Contro.* 30. *Art.* 5. See Chap. II. p. 73, 74, of this discourse.